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of the
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DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, March 9, 1979

Time: 10:00 a.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 gallery on my right, where we have 80 students of Grade XI Standing from Miles Macdonnell School, under the direction of Mr. Bagera. This school is in the Constituency of the Honourable Member for Kildonan.

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

Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . . Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees . . . Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports.

TABLING OF REPORTS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. GERALD W.J. MERCIER (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the Sixth Annual Report to March 31st, 1978, the Legal Aid Services Society of Manitoba.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Sports and Recreation.

HON. ROBERT (Bob) BANMAN (La Verendrye): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the Annual Report of the Communities Economic Development Fund, for the year ending March 31, 1978.

MR. SPEAKER: Notices of Motion . . . Introduction of Bills.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SAUL CHERNIACK (St. Johns): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to address a question to the Minister of Health, in the light of an interview which I saw last night on TV. I'm wondering if would confirm unequivocally that neither the government nor the Health Services Commission have made any decisions regarding the future of the community health centres with whom apparently someone is meeting today.

HON. L.R. (Bud) SHERMAN (Fort Garry): Yes, I can confirm that, Mr. Speaker. Certainly I can confirm it from the point of view of the government. The Health Services Commission may have made some decisions with respect to recommendations that have been made to the government, but no recommendations have been accepted.

MR. CHERNIACK: Well then further may I ask, Mr. Speaker, whether it is clear then that the meetings which are scheduled for today and which I believe are forty-five minutes apart, will be only for the purpose of discussions, and for the purpose of giving the health centres an opportunity to understand and review the thinking with them. Could the minister also of the people who are meeting inform just who is conducting these meetings on behalf of the people of Manitoba.

MR. SHERMAN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I can confirm that. The people of Manitoba are represented through officials of my department, including my associate Deputy Minister, including officials of the Health Services Commission, and if the Honourable Member for St. Boniface, who is now making his maiden speech of this session can contain himself, I'll try to continue, Mr. Speaker. And the community health centres are represented by members of their own boards.

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

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, the minister was making comments extraneous to his answer and I'm not quite sure that I heard him say clearly that the purpose of the meetings today is discussion only, and not to transmit any decisions of any kind.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. SHERMAN: That's correct, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. SIDNEY GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Finance. May I be advised by the Minister of Finance whether it is his practice upon receiving a notice of objection with regard to an assessment under the Succession Duty Act, whether it is his practice to obtain legal advice as to whether the objection is sound or is not sound before making an order varying, confirming or reassessing the assessment.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. DONALD W. CRAIK: Well, Mr. Speaker, I think the member will have to be more specific with regards to it. If he has a particular case, I suggest to him that the cases that are dealt with are fairly limited. I think he has to be more specific with regards to the question he has in mind.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, may I ask whether the minister would make a decision such as he is entitled to under 41.3, without receiving legal advice as to the validity or non-validity of the objection.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, offhand I don't even know what Section 41.3 is, but I'll have to look at it to narrow the specifics of the question.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, did the minister receive a Notice of Objection with regard to the estate of a former member of the Legislature, namely Earl McKellar, and if he did receive such Notice of Objection, did he receive legal advice before making a decision with regard to that assessment?

MR. CRAIK: Well, Mr. Speaker, now that we know specifically what the member is talking about, I'll take the question as notice and have a look at it.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, when the minister is taking the question as notice, and now that he has the specifics, I wonder whether he can tell us whether he received legal advice with regard to that assessment, whether he allowed that assessment, whether the first step with regard to giving relief to that estate was not to Cabinet by way of an attempt to get relief by way of Order-in-Council; that Cabinet said that Order-in-Council would not be an appropriate way, because it would be made public and, therefore, asked for an objection to come in so that it can be dealt with by the minister without an Order-in-Council being dealt with.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I'll take the member's question as notice as I have indicated and will look at the specifics of the question.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster with another question?

MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether it is necessary for the minister to take this question as notice as to whether or not relief was in fact granted to the beneficiaries of the estate of Earl McKellar under Section 41.3 which gives the power to the minister to reassess upon receiving a Notice of Objection. Does he have to take that question as notice, or does he know or not know?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Well Mr. Speaker, I told the member that I'm not even aware of what he refers to as being Section 41.3 Let me have a look at Section 41.3 before I attempt to answer to answer him.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster with a fifth question.

MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, without reference to the section, did the Minister use his authority as Minister to grant relief some kind to the beneficiaries of the Estate of Earl McKellar.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, there has been consideration taken in and a suggestion made and an offer made with regards to settlement of that estate, whether or not it is settled, I can't say at this point in time. There has been a small number of estates where the discretion allowed to the Minister has been exercised.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster with a sixth question.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister can confirm that those estates were first referred, including one relating to Earl McKellar, were first referred to Cabinet, with the intention of having the Cabinet waive the taxation and that it went back from Cabinet to the Minister so there would not be an Order-in-Council relating to it.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance

MR. CRAIK: Well, Mr. Speaker, the question has already been taken as notice. If the member wants me to say for the third time, I've taken it as notice. I have.

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

MR. LAURENT L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health. Can he tell us the value and the honesty and the sincerity of the meeting between the Health Services Commission and the community clinics, if they've already made their decision as to what recommendations they'll make to the government.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. That question is hypothetical. It's out of order. The Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, another question to the same Minister. Does he intend to give us the information that I asked a few days ago before the Estimates, where I can make more than a maiden speech or is he going to stall again like last year and give it to us while we are looking at his Estimates?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I think the Honourable member asked for that information on Tuesday or Wednesday of this week. That request was passed immediately to my Deputy Minister; I'll have that information just as quickly as possible. I had not expected that my Estimates would be up quite as soon as we have now scheduled them to come up, but I will make every effort to have that information for my honourable friend before I get into my Estimates.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, does my honourable friend realize that I have reason to ask that because last year the Estimates were last or practically last and I had asked for three months before that and didn't get the answer.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. RUSSELL DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Health concerning the . . . My question for the Minister of Health is this, since the Minister and his colleagues made a decision to remove the Reh-Fit centre from the old Concordia Hospital, did they consider replacing it with something else?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. SHERMAN: No and no, Mr. Speaker, we didn't make any such decision to remove it. That decision was made by the Reh-Fit Centre Board itself.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I would then ask the Minister in view of the fact that the Concordia Hospital is in danger of being demolished, could the Minister look into the possibility of converting it or utilizing it for a nursing home, a recreation centre, or a centre for the well elderly.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. SHERMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, the old Concordia Hospital belongs to the city, as the honourable member knows. We have examined the possible use of it from a provincial point of view, decided that it was not of any practical use to us; the renovation and conversion and operating costs would not justify its utilization in the manner that the honourable member suggests, and we have decided that we don't have any use for it.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I then ask the Minister or his colleague, the Minister of Urban Affairs, if he could outline what financial settlement was obtained from the city for the land and buildings?

MR. SHERMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, that was public knowledge. The arrangement with the city on the Concordia Hospital, and in fact the amounts of money that were paid to various municipal corporations for the equity commitments and the borrowing that they had entered into for capital construction in the hospital field, all of that information was reported in both the daily newspapers at the time that we made the settlement with the city. I would have to go back and look it up, but it's been on the public record.

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the Day. The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. HARVEY BOSTROM (Rupertsland): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Resources. I wonder if he could confirm that there have very recently been a large number of layoffs in his department and if so, how many people have received their termination notice?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Mines and Natural Resources.

HON. BRIAN RANSOM (Souris-Killarney): Mr. Speaker, my Estimates are now before the House, and I think that that's the most appropriate time to discuss those matters.

MR. BOSTROM: Well, Mr. Speaker, I've looked at the Estimates, and I've tried to determine where these positions have been taken off the records and, Mr. Speaker, my question to him is, why is the Minister requesting the funds for positions that he has already decided to terminate?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. May I suggest to the honourable member that he ask his questions in the appropriate place.

The Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health. The Minister has made a false statement just a minute ago, saying that the city is the deal with not . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. May I suggest to the honourable member that if he uses language that could possibly be unparliamentary, the responsibility lies on his own shoulders.

The Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'll repeat that: Does the Minister feel that he's made a false statement when he stated that the deal between the city and the Health Services Commission for the government had been publicized. ?T The question that was asked, and I'm asking the question of the Minister again, what was received in lieu of property from the government from the city for the property of the old Concordia Hospital?

MR. SHERMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, the arrangement on the Concordia Hospital was that the province did not accept the lease. We returned the option on the lease to the city; there was a financial settlement made relative to the city's involvement in the financing of the new Concordia

Hospital. Now I can look up those specific figures, but they were reported in the public media at the time.

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

MR. DESJARDINS: I think the Honourable Minister is evading the question. The question is this: what was received in lieu of the property? Just shut up a minute, eh? I'm not talking to you; you've got some Ministers — you're the one that was saying that you're . . .

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

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, isn't it the case that the City of Winnipeg had guaranteed their share of the fund to construct the new hospital? The new Concordia Hospital. In return they were given the property of the old Concordia Hospital. They never paid because of a change in legislation; they never had to pay . . . I'm asking . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. This is a time for asking questions, not for making statements. The Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: Now, what I want to know, Mr. Speaker, when he's finished coaching from his little friend, I want to know if what has been paid in lieu of that, if the City still owns the property and did not pay anything on the construction of Concordia Hospital; that if the Minister doesn't know, I wish he'd take it in consideration and not say that it was made public, because it wasn't. Thank you, . Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The question is repetitive. Orders of the Day. The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, in the light of the questions asked by the Honourable Member for Inkster in regard to an estate and about which I did not know of this, and the Minister having accepted as notice and will report back in regard to that estate, I'd like him to, if he would, at the same time undertake to bring to the House whatever correspondence may have taken place in regard to this estate with the previous government, and particularly correspondence with the applicant in regard to a claim that was made at the time of the prior government's dealing with this estate. Is he prepared to do that?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. May I suggest to the Honourable Member that that question may better be handled by an Address for Papers? The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, it may be that it would be better handled for an Address for Papers, but the Minister has indicated a desire or a degree of cooperation in bringing back information. You must realize, Sir, that an Address for Papers does not have to be accepted, whereas the Minister has already indicated that he will be prepared to look into the matter and report back. This, Mr. Speaker, is, I believe, a rather serious subject which must be reported on, and since the previous government received an application for reassessment and dealt with it, as I seem to recall, I think the Minister ought to be prepared to indicate what was the history of the estate tax or succession duty return and application for re-assessment made to the prior government.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The kind of information the Honourable Member is seeking is rather detailed and complicated, and I suggest he ask for it either Address for Papers or Order for a Return. The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: On a Point of Order, you and I and many of us know that there are various ways to obtain information from the treasury bench. One of the more common ones is when you ask a question and the treasury bench agrees to respond. Now you seem to think it's complicated, whereas as I recall it, there was a Letter of Complaint from the widow setting out certain allegations as to ownership of land, which as I recall it had no substantiation in law, and that on that basis I believe I had something to do with pointing out that her allegation that certain land was owned jointly was incorrect.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. The time for Question Period is for asking questions,

not for giving information, or making statements.

The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, on a Point of Order. You indicated to me, Mr. Speaker, that an Address for Papers would be complicated, and I was attempting to explain to you, Mr. Speaker, on the Point of Order, that I recall one letter to the Minister, one reply, and that's not complicated. Now, there may have been more and there may have been certain in-house information — it's up to the Minister to tell us whether he's prepared to bring back to us the letters and correspondence with which we dealt, or whether he will not produce it — it's up to him to decide.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to comment further on your ruling which the member seems to want to challenge. Your suggestion to him is the normal procedure; if he wants certain papers that date back, that's fine, he should proceed in that manner. I've undertaken if in the course of investigation of looking into the question raised by the Member for Inkster, there is value served in it, let me first check into the case to see where it stands, and I'll report back on the question from the Member for Inkster.

At the present time I'm not prepared to entertain the request of the Member for St. Johns. He has a very legalistic approach to them; he knows the legal procedures of this House, let him file his Order for Return, or his Address for Papers in the usual manner.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Labour perhaps, and in the absence of the House Leader, may I direct a question to the First Minister.

Is it correct that the Hansard employees are required to work a six and one-half hour shift without a break? And, Mr. Speaker, I don't know when it would have started, if it started previously under our administration — it's still wrong, but I want to know whether the Hansard staff are required to work a six and one-half hour shift without a break?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. STERLING R. LYON (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Labour, whom I can report to my honourable friend is absent in hospital with some minor surgery, will be absent a few more days, I will happily take that question as Notice.

The interim nods that I am getting from sources who would have intimate knowledge of this would indicate that this is not the case, but we'll look into it and reply to our honourable friend.

MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, when the Minister is looking into it, and there is some urgency because I have received a call from a former employee of Hansard, former as of a couple of days ago, who states that she was dismissed with two days notice, because she attempted to take a break for a snack during a six and one-half hour shift. She was dismissed; she aays for that reason; I'm not either verifying or contradicting her position, but I know that the Minister will agree with me that he would not want to see an employee being required to take a six and one-half hour shift without a break. Even Members of the House walk out from time to time to have a break. If it is six and one-half hours . . . and see whether this person's complaint is justified or not. I believe they may not be part of the Civil Service Union, and that is why she called.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, I'll be happy to look into my honourable friend's allegation. Those who struggle so hard on Hansard serve doubly because it's bad enough we and the press have to listen to what goes on here, they have to type it up and that's even worse.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. J. R. (Bud) BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, a question to the Attorney-General. Would the Attorney-General take as notice a question as to the validity of the figures which suggest a tripling of the number of garnishment orders issued last year over the year previously.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'll accept that question as notice.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. BOYCE: I wonder if the Attorney-General could make an effort to have that information available prior to the debate on the bill which amends The Garnishment Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: There should be no difficulty in that, Mr. Speaker. I haven't noticed any real enthusiasm from the members opposite to respond to the legislation.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Flin Flon.

MR. THOMAS BARROW: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I direct my question, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Health.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Member for Flin Flon.

MR. BARROW: Given the new Conservative policy of imposing an additional million dollars taxation on the sick, could the Minister inform the House how much he's going to take from the community clinics so the poor mining companies will have their royalties reduced?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. May I suggest to the Honourable Member for Flin Flon that questions should be purely for the purpose of seeking information, should not — and if the Honourable Member wishes, I can give him the full quotation on what type of questions are allowable and which aren't. The Honourable Member for Flin Flon care to rephrase his question?

The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. SHERMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, the short answer would be nothing, but I would like to read the Honourable Member's question in Hansard after it is printed. I would just remind the Honourable Member that special arrangements have been made as he knows with respect to Pharmacare coverage for certain trade union organizations related to specific industries in the north, which represent a pretty considerable improvement for them in their position.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Flin Flon.

MR. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, is the Honourable Minister a distant relative of the Sheriff of Nottingham?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. SHERMAN: There are some branches of the family tree, Mr. Speaker, that I don't wish to disclose or describe in this House, but Nottingham and the Sheriff, as far as I know, they so far don't appear anywhere in the records. I'll take that question as notice.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

MR. PETER FOX: Yes, Mr. Speaker. To the First Minister, in view of the fact that the Minister of Labour says he will have to take the question raised in respect to the minimum wage to Cabinet, can the First Minister indicate how soon they will make a decision on that, because there is lead time necessary and those people are getting farther and farther behind all the time.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, I am quite confident that the Minister of Labour, in his usual intelligent and brisk way will dispatch all of the business of his department, including the matter to which my honourable friend makes reference, with that degree of urgency and with that degree of skill that even my honourable friends opposite must admire.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

MR. FOX: Well, I appreciate the assurance of the First Minister and the confidence he has in the Minister of Labour. Unfortunately, I don't have the same confidence because the people are being taxed right and left. Yesterday the Minister of Health announced that . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. May I tell the Honourable Member that this is a period for seeking information, not for making statements. The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

MR. FOX: Mr. Speaker, I agree with you. But the First Ministers reply prompted the information I had to give the First Minister. Let me ask him how soon again can he inform the House will the decision be made?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, as I previously indicated, the Minister of Labour regrettably is temporarily indisposed in hospital. I imagine that when he gets out of hospital — when he's back working at his desk that the recommendations he has to make on that and a number of other matters will be brought before Cabinet in due course.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. WILSON PARASIUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister responsible for senior citizens' housing. Can the Minister confirm that he has received a letter from Roblin Residence Incorporated dated March 1, 1979, stating that they have 48 applications for senior citizens' housing which are all eligible by MHRC rules and regulations?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister responsible for MHRC.

MR. J. FRANK JOHNSTON: Yes, I did receive a letter, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Minister; in the light of the fact that there are 48 bona fide applications, will the Minister now withdraw the Conservative government's cancellation of the previously committed 42 unit senior citizens' residence for Roblin?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister responsible for MHRC.

MR. JOHNSTON: I'm not prepared to say that we will withdraw that decision, Mr. Speaker. The decision was not to go ahead with the home in Roblin. The decision was made to make it a different size. If it has to be looked at again, we will look at it.

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

MR. PARASIUK: Would the Minister ensure that he will not reduce the size from 42 units now that it is confirmed that there are 48 applications for senior citizens' housing in Roblin?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister responsible for MHRC.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, the reduction has already been made. If it has to be increased, we will look at it.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Logan.

MR. WILLIAM JENKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Health. Since the Minister and the government increased the Pharmacare costs to Manitobans under the age of 65 yesterday by their announcement, can the Minister assure — has he taken into consideration what this will cost people who are on social assistance, and there is there any special way that these will be covered?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. SHERMAN: That certainly was taken into consideration, Mr. Speaker. It didn't have to be considered very long, because social allowance recipients don't have to pay for their drug costs. That's covered under social allowances.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Logan.

MR. JENKINS: Well, then a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Has the Minister of Health taken into consideration the further deterioration of those people on the minimum wage, who also have to pay Medicare costs and how much further this will reduce their actual spending power.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, the impact on the citizens of Manitoba in all areas of the community was taken into account, and the average citizen of Manitoba I am absolutely confident, would say with assurance and with support that the Pharmacare Program is it's desirable, it needs to be supported and maintained, we expect to pay something to maintain it.

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

MR. JENKINS: Is the Minister of Health aware that there has not been an increase in the minimum wage since September 1st, 1976, and that the erosion of the spending power of these people, and his further erosion by the increase in the Medicare premiums. . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. May I point out to the honourable member that questions of awareness are out of order. The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Attorney-General, in view of his answer to the Member for Fort Rouge yesterday. He made the statement that judges are taking a harder line with juveniles, and I would ask him whether he is concerned that judges appear to be taking a softer line with certain adult offenders, either unable or unwilling to send them to jail.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I indicated the courts were taking a firmer position in cases where more serious sentences were deserved in considering transfers of juveniles from juvenile court to adult court. The question is a general one in nature that is difficult to answer, Mr. Speaker. These matters have to be considered case by case on their merits.

MR. DOERN: Well, Mr. Speaker, my question — I will perhaps try to make it clearer, is this — that the Attorney-General argued that the hard is unrelated to a shortage of facilities for juvenile line of juveniles offenders; that is what he said. I am asking him whether there is now an apparent soft line on some adult offenders that is also unrelated to a shortage of facilities for adult offenders. Is it a coincidence or is it a change in hard or soft line?

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, the question is one that is very general in nature, and I would have to have the specifics of the case that is referred to before I would be able to answer it.

MR. DOERN: Then I would ask the Attorney-General if he would care to comment on the allegation by Justice Garson, that he was unable to sentence a convicted thief to prison because there was no room in Headingley Jail.

MR. MERCIER: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I am concerned.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. HOWARD PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary to the Attorney-General. Can he confirm the information provided to us last evening by the Minister of Highways to the effect that the record of traffic convictions on the part of juveniles are not transmitted from the courts to the Motor Vehicle Branch for their records and for their subsequent action.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I will take that question as notice.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, in taking the question as notice, is the Attorney-General prepared to meet with the Minister of Highways and Transportation, or to review this situation related to us by the Minister of Highways last evening?

MR. MERCIER: Well certainly, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Transcona. **MR. PARASIUK:** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed again to the Minister responsible for Senior Citizens Housing. Since the need for senior citizens housing in Roblin has been documented and since the project has been cancelled by the Conservative Government for eighteen months . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. May I suggest the question is repetitive. He has already asked questions on this problem.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Speaker, this is my preamble. I haven't asked the question yet, so I can't understand how you can determine whether it is repetitive or not.

Again, since the project has been cancelled for eighteen months by the Conservative restraint program, can the minister ensure the House that the needed Roblin project will be started in the forthcoming construction season?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister responsible for MHRC.

MR. JOHNSTON: First of all, Mr. Speaker, the project was not cancelled; it was reduced. There was discussion with the people in Roblin to come to that decision. I have said to the honourable member if they now have 42 applications, or 45, we will take another look at it, but I would remind the honourable member, Mr. Speaker, that the rule that that government over there brought in was, when you had 45 applications, you built 25 units. That was always the rule that they had. If there was 100 applications, they built 50, if there was 75, they built half of that. That was the rule put in by the NDP government, Mr. Speaker, but I assure the member we will look at it again.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Speaker, I assume that you will allow the same latitude with my question as you have just allowed for the minister's answer. And given that precedence of latitude, Mr. Speaker, I would ask the minister to answer the direct question, will he ensure that this needed senior citizens housing project in Roblin, which has been cancelled for eighteen months begins in this construction season?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Order please. The question is repetitive and is out of order. The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. BOSTROM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the First Minister. I wonder if the First Minister can explain to the public servants who were recently laid off in the Resources Department, why he is not following his promise, his written promise to the civil servants of Manitoba that reductions would be made by attrition only, this promise having been made by him during the election campaign.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, as the minister has already indicated, this matter is being discussed in Estimates which are before us once we get through the Question Period. With respect to the general topic, the bulk of the reduction in the Public Service of Manitoba that has occurred in the last eighteen months, the vast majority of it has been by way of attrition, for my honourable friend's edification.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Acting Government House Leader.

HON. EDWARD MCGILL (Brandon West): Mr. Speaker, would you call Bill No. 4.

GOVERNMENT BILLS — ADJOURNED DEBATES ON SECOND READING
BILL NO. 4 — AN ACT TO AMEND THE TESTATORS FAMILY MAINTENANCE ACT

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

MR. FOX: Mr. Speaker, I adjourn this for my honourable colleague, the Member for St. Johns.

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

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I am just waiting for a moment to make sure that the First Minister leaves, so I may proceed in a sense of quiet and without interruption.

Mr. Speaker, the intent of the bill as presented by the Honourable, the Attorney-General, seems a worthwhile addition to the law as it is now, to protect dependants of a testator who may have neglected to look after them in his will, and the intent I think is desirable and recognizes an important progressive attitude to children who are born from parents who were not married to each other.

Mr. Speaker, I use that term to indicate that there are other ways of describing an illegitimate child and I only do that to inform the House, Mr. Speaker, that I've heard two or three quick reactions against the term. It was not one that I felt was very serious, because it's a legal description of a status, but we've heard often that one should speak of illegitimate parents and not illegitimate children. And, as I say from the legal sense, especially in this case where one is giving a right to a class of people who were formerly denied rights; it seems more obvious to describe that class in the form in which they were denied rights, so that it will be clear that they acquire the rights. Nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, I've had an opportunity to speak to Legislative Counsel only about the description and ask them whether he would not try to think of some other way to describe it, so that possibly in the future we can remove pejorative words from the statute.

Now, I don't put too much stress on the importance of doing it, but it might be desirable and possibly when we deal with this bill in committee, we or the Attorney-General, or Legislative Counsel will come up with another description that might be more acceptable to whenever a person hears the description or reads it. Other than that, Mr. Speaker, I've no other comments except to say by all means, let's proceed with dealing with this bill.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General would be closing debate. The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, in view of the comments from the Member for St. Johns, I would be most interested in pursuing the matter that he has raised further and if there is a possible change in terminology that might be used to cover the same intent, I would be agreeable to that and we could perhaps discuss that further in committee, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried. **MR. SPEAKER:** Is it the intention to proceed with the bills in order?

The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. EDWARD MCGILL (Brandon West): Bill No. 5, Mr. Speaker.

BILL NO. 5 — CRIMINAL INJURIES COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 5. The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

MR. FOX: Mr. Speaker, I wish to have this matter stand but if any other member wishes to speak, I am prepared to allow him to have the floor.

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

MR. CHERNIACK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I assure you that the Honourable Member for Kildonan fully expected that I would rise, because I wanted to make some comments, and yet there may be others who may want to make a contribution.

Firstly, Mr. Speaker, I can't help but express my pleasure at the fact that not only do we have an Act such as The Criminal Injuries Compensation Act, but that we get annual reports which show

that it was an extremely worthwhile measure to have brought in, and one which I believe needs review and consideration to see the extent to which it has carried out the intent and purpose of correcting what has been a serious social and economic burden placed on people who are the innocent victims of criminal acts, and I think one of the other members of our group will wish to speak a little more extensively on the possibility of further extensions.

Dealing specifically with the bill before us, the Honourable, the Attorney-General has pointed out quite rightly that there is now an occasion when it's advisable to extend the limitation period rather than rely on the need for an application to be made and the limitation period extended. There is no real important change in this, since the right was always there, but now it becomes a right as of law rather than the discretion granted to the board.

The only matter that I want to bring to the attention of the Honourable, the Attorney-General is that the present Act provides that in considering compensation, the character of the applicant may be considered, may be reviewed, which means of course that it may have an impact on the extent to which there should be, or if there should be compensation. This is in the present act, and the proposal in this bill is to add the words, "and the victim" so that it would be not only the character of the applicant but also the character of the victim. There is no objection, of course, I think it's desirable to include the words "and the victim" for the reasons as suggested by the Attorney-General, and I think there are probably other reasons when that might apply. But it brought to mind the concern about why character has to be considered at all, and it's in the act, it was brought in I say with a great deal of pride, I believe by the New Democratic government. The entire concept was brought in by us, and may I say by me originally back around 1964, I believe. I suppose other legislation was used as a basis for including the character of the applicant, but I know longer recall nor have I bothered to research the reason for the character of the applicant or victim to be involved in the consideration and, therefore, I would like to tell the Attorney-General that I would appreciate it if during the committee stage, we can discuss the reason for including character at all.

One can well understand that provocation might be a factor; that the circumstances might be such as to lay a certain amount of blame on the victim, but I cannot offhand think of any reason why the character of the victim should be brought into consideration, and therefore, I would like to discuss it even though it's in the present legislation. I'd like to discuss why it should stay there, and for that purpose I'm wondering whether the Honourable, the Attorney-General will not see to it that persons from the board will come before the committee to deal with my specific inquiry as to the term "character", but also give us an opportunity to find out how the Act is working, whether there is anything else that could be discussed to improve the administration of the Act, because as I believe this board does not appear in any normal way before legislative committees. This would be a good opportunity for them to come in and specifically they can give us a reason for asking for this change that is being proposed in the bill, but it would be desirable if they would be prepared to discuss a little more as to why it is necessary to have those restraints that are now imposed by the Act, and give us an opportunity in that way to review some of the features of the legislation as it now exists, and as it would exist after it's amended. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Is there agreement that the bill stands in the name of the Honourable Member for Kildonan? (Agreed)

The Honourable Acting House Leader.

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Speaker, would you call Bill No. 8 and thereafter the bills as they appear under the adjourned debates on second reading.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 8, An Act to amend The Mental Health Act. I notice the Member for Kildonan is not in his seat. (Stands)

How about Bill No. 9? (Stands)

Bill No. 11 - An Act to amend The Provincial Judges Act.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I believe that I could speak on this and we could let the bill go. The Honourable Member for Kildonan was holding it for me.

BILL NO. 11 — PROVINCIAL JUDGES ACT

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

MR. FOX: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have been standing this Bill on behalf of the Honourable Member

for St. Johns.

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

MR. CHERNIACK: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Bill No. 11 appears to be straightforward, the only question that occurs to me is whether or not the judges should not be participants in the negotiations under the collective agreement, if in fact they are being given the benefits of negotiations that will take place between the civil servants, the Manitoba Government Employees Association and the Government and maybe the Minister will be prepared to make them subject at least to the rand formula so that they make a contribution to the burden of dealing with government on behalf of the employees. So that of course the benefits intended to be passed on to them may be quite desirable.

The Attorney General has not reported on the extent to which this was discussed with the provincial judges or their organization, nor the extent to which they would want to be tied to a union which in effect is what is being done here. I, for one, could not object at all but I do still think that they should have certain rights if they are going to get the benefits, they should have certain rights and certain responsibilities and that is something that possibly again we should be prepared to discuss in Committee.

I hope that some representative on behalf of the provincial judges would be prepared to come before the Committee and discuss the features of the changes that would be brought about as a result of this legislation. I rather feel that that would be the right thing to do, Mr. Speaker, they are an important group in the employment of the people of Manitoba and if we are passing legislation affecting them, I think it would be proper that at the proper stage, at Committee level, that a spokesman on their behalf should be present to answer questions that may arise. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General will be closing debate. The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, before this Bill moves to Committee, I'll give some consideration to the comments from the Member for St. Johns. I would be most concerned however that the independence of the judiciary from the Legislature and the Executive Committee of Government be maintained and I would be reluctant at first glance to involving representatives of the judges' association before a Legislative Committee dealing with this matter. The matter has been discussed by me with representatives of the Judges Association but I think the clear delineation between the judiciary and the other institutions of government has to be maintained.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

MR. SPEAKER Bill No. 12. The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

MR. FOX: Mr. Speaker, I would like to have this matter stand, too, and to facilitate the procedure of the House I would like to have Bill 15 stay in my name as well. But I understand the Honourable Member for St. Johns wishes to speak on it.

BILL NO. 15 — THE GARNISHMENT ACT

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

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, firstly, I want to compliment the Attorney-General for bringing in this legislation so quick after the report was received from the Law Reform Commission. It's an overdue bit of legislation and overdue only to the extent that I know the government has been waiting to get the final recommendations from the Law Reform Commission. But the date of the report from the Commission is January 8, 1979 and I'm glad that the Attorney-General acted as quickly as he did.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I commend the report itself to members and to many people who are interested in the background of passing legislation of this type to read this report. It's very well written, it's clear, it develops the background and makes recommendations in such a way that is very helpful to legislators and I commend it to their attention. Having said that, I'm not sure that I agree with the detailed recommendations that they are making but certainly their review is valuable.

I was surprised to hear from one of the members on this side in the Question Period today an indication that garnishment orders have tripled over last year. I think that was the statement

that was made and I think the Attorney-General agreed to look into it. If that is the case, it is an unfortunate situation and it also means that the legislation that we've passed must be overdue because there is no question that the present exemptions are very low and that means there must have been people hurt.

I mention that to draw to the attention of members of this House that the present legislation does give the opportunity to both creditor and debtor or either creditor or debtor to appear before a court and have a variation made in the order. And that's important for two reasons: one is that it may be a very harsh burden placed on the debtor to have to have so much of his income taken away for payment of debt, on the other hand it may be that the debtor is taking advantage of protections under the Act so that a creditor is hard put.

But generally speaking, Mr. Speaker, a creditor should be considered to be somewhat like a buyer under the free market system where we developed a concept in years gone by of caveat emptor, let the buyer beware and I sometimes think that the creditors ought to be exactly in that position. Let them know what they are getting into when they are extending credit. Now that doesn't always apply and many times there are judgements that have nothing to do with normal commerce and normal credit granting but really have more to do with debts that arise in other ways where the debtor does not have an excuse of saying well he took advantage of the free market situation which involved him in getting the benefit of credit. So that I feel that when a person's earnings are being attached that he needs not only the protection of an Act such as we are dealing with now, but also needs to make sure that his rights are not encroached upon to the extent where there is a hardship created on his family, and that's the reason for exemptions.

The Law Reform Commission has suggested that, since an employer has to respond to garnishment of wages, that that employer should not have to go to any great deal of problem to figure out what the exemption is. So they're saying, let's give them a good yardstick — or should one now say meterstick — to arrive at the amount which is exempt, so they say why not tie it to a known thing like minimum wage, and one might say — not facetiously — that if one is in a period of conservative administration then it becomes simple because there are no changes in the minimum wage so it becomes a standard exemption. Historically speaking, that can be said quite openly that in sixteen months there has not been a change in minimum wage.

Of course, as I read the Law Reform Commission's recommendation, they say, make it a percentage of minimum wage. I think they say 50 percent of minimum wage for single, and I think 70 percent of minimum wage for married. But the government has decided to fix the amount rather than leave it as a percentage for calculation; that again would seem indicate that they know where they're at and they might as well stay there, and leave that amount.

The Law Reform Commission has given us a listing of changes in minimum wage, which might be well to read into the record. For the last ten years, is the information they give, "October 1, 1970, the minimum wage was \$1.50; on November 1, 1971, it was \$1.65; on October 1, 1972, it was \$1.75; on October 1, 1973, it was \$1.90; on July 1, 1974, it was \$2.15; on January 1, 1975, it was \$2.30; on October 1, 1975, it was \$2.60; on September 1, 1976, it was \$2.95; and of course it has not moved since September 1, 1976." And I say parenthetically, Mr. Speaker, that I am rather shocked that the Minister of Labour can get away with saying, well, the NDP sat on reports and didn't act, when one sees that on September 1, 1976, the minimum wage was raised to \$2.95, there was an election called within I think twelve months of that time, and no change was made during that period and certainly not before the election, because that in itself might have been criticized had the minimum wage been raised just before an election. But for sixteen months of Conservative administration, there has not been any change in minimum wage, and therefore, aside from condemning the Minister of Labour for not even discussing his reasons for delay, but definitely pointing out that this government has not acted on it; has not discussed it and as I recall the previous Minister last year was very quiet about it and refused to respond to all the inquiries and requests on this side of the House that they deal with minimum wage.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General on a Point of Order.

MR. MERCIER: On a Point of Order, Mr. Speaker, I'm just wondering what the relevance is of the present comments of the Member for St. Johns to the Bill that's presently before us?

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

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, on the Point of Order, I marvel that the Attorney-General should raise this, because he must know full well that he has indicated to us that the change proposed in this Bill is directly related to the minimum wage. One need only look at what he, himself, said, and he is the only one who spoke on this Bill — he introduced it — and he said that the Commission

recommended that the exemption be increased to, in a married case, to 70 percent of the minimum monthly wage.

We have opted," he said, "to express exemptions in absolute terms." But, Mr. Speaker, it is clear that not only did the Commission recommend that the minimum be set in relation to the minimum wage, but the Attorney-General confirmed that in his opinion and in the government's opinion it should be related. Therefore, since we're discussing the amount of the exemption and since it's related to minimum wage, how can we avoid discussing minimum wage, Mr. Speaker?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Attorney-General on a Point of Order.

MR. MERCIER: Yes, Mr. Speaker, on the same Point of Order, I would suggest that the debate should be directed as to whether or not the exemption should be a percentage of the minimum wage and not whether or not the minimum wage should be increased.

MR. CHERNIACK: On the Point of Order, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is very clear that the Minister has drafted a Bill which he has related to the minimum wage, and says that it is a percentage, the fact is it is not quite a percentage. It is a rounding off and a rounding down of the minimum wage, but Mr. Speaker, it's related to the minimum wage. If he wants to discuss the amount, then I will discuss the amount only, but I have to discuss it in relation to social allowances; I have to discuss it in relation to cost of living . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Is the member speaking on a Point of Order?

MR. CHERNIACK: Yes, I was just going to conclude my sentence.

MR. SPEAKER: I would suggest to the honourable member that the Attorney-General did not have a Point of Order.

MR. CHERNIACK: Oh well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. It so happens that I could continue my debate by completing the sentence, which I was dealing with under a Point of Order, by pointing out that it's minimum wage that is what he hangs his calculation on, therefore, it's minimum wage which I want to direct myself to.

But, Mr. Speaker, further than that, I think that one can discuss what an exemption should be based on the least a person can earn in this province, which is presumably the minimum wage.

Mr. Speaker, I am critical of the government for its delay in dealing with minimum wage, with discussing minimum wage; I am critical of the government for not increasing the minimum wage, and it is obvious, Mr. Speaker, that if the Minister of Labour finally moves and finally does something, and finally increases the minimum wage, then the moment he increases the minimum wage, then this Bill before us becomes obsolete, in the terms of the Attorney-General. Because he says that he is setting the exemption at 50 percent in one case, and 70 percent in another case, of the monthly minimum wage. Well, then one would think that if the Minister of Labour finally decides to increase the minimum wage, that the Attorney-General will be coming back to this House very quickly and saying, now that the minimum wage is changed we have to change the exemption, because he's tied it to that. If that were the case, then I would suggest to him that he could, in the legislation, say, that it shall be as recommended by the Law Reform Commission a percentage of minimum wage, and then have the government undertake, either through the legislation be compelled to undertake, to publicize in the memorandum attached to a Garnishment Order 45 -46 what the minimum wage is at the time of the issuance of the order, and what the percentage would be, and at least that way it would prevent the danger of the minimum wage being raised between sessions without the legislation being able to be changed because of the time between sessions. But I think, Mr. Speaker, we can accept the fact that we can expect no more from the Conservative government than we've known of them in the last sixteen months and that therefore they don't propose to change the minimum wage and if they don't propose to change the minimum wage then the Attorney-General can rest secure and sleep nights knowing that he won't have to come running back to change the legislation to update his figures to correspond with the changes that will come about through minimum wage.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm not really joking about this. I do think that the principle of exemption in garnishment of wages is one that has been accepted over so many years that it really shouldn't be debatable. As I recall it, it was something like \$60 a month passed, I think, in 1924. I don't know where my recollection comes from; it may be that it was referred to in the Law Reform Commission itself — yes, yes, my memories are refreshed because I just read it in the last week and would have reported on it sooner had only the Attorney-General been able to persuade the

House Leader to have this bill called earlier. But in 1924 the Garnishment Act provided for \$30 for a single person and \$60 for a person with dependents, and then a change was made, I believe, in the 60s where it was increased. And then more recently it was increased again. I'm not critical of the delay that has taken place in increasing the minimum wage because, as I say, this matter was referred to the Law Reform Commission by the Attorney-General in 1973, December, 1973, and now that we have a report in 1979 that it's being dealt with as expeditiously as the Honourable the Attorney-General could have done.

Mr. Speaker, Manitoba social assistance rates provide now for a single person of \$263.50. I relate that to the proposal that a single person's exemption should be \$250 and also to the fact that this is some 50 percent of minimum wage. Manitoba social assistance rates for family of four, that is with two children, two ten year old children, is \$555; the proposal by the Attorney-General is that the exemption for a married person be \$350. So that it's substantially less than the Manitoba government believes should be paid to a family of four under social assistance.

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that this is probably inadequate, that the exemption here is probably inadequate. I think it needs further exploration. I would rather, as I indicated earlier, like to feel that it will be redesigned in such a way as not to be fixed but be a variable depending on cost of living or cost of food and shelter, which are probably the basic necessities for any family, and therefore it could be done in relation to a variable, but of course I agree that the court should be given the right, if not the Attorney-General's department or the court officials, to state in the memorandum to the garnishee what they then exemption is.

Just for the record, the calculation I have is that 50 percent of the minimum monthly wage is \$255.47, which is, as I indicated earlier, more than the Attorney-General has set out in the bill where he said it states \$250.00. Why he couldn't have said \$260 and thus rounded out in favour of the debtor rather than the creditor is a matter of his conscience. I don't mean conscience in that sense, I mean a matter for his justification, his own justification. In a case of a person with dependents, 70 percent of the minimum monthly wage is \$357.66, which again is slightly more than the exemption that he is proposing and again he could have rounded it out, I believe, to a slightly more rather than slightly less to give the person who is hard up a greater benefit.

But I come back to repeating, because it's worth repeating, that the report itself is very, very readable and clearly presented and is worth reading, and I'm glad that the Attorney-General did act quickly after receipt of this report to bring this legislation before us. I would think that when we get into committee stage, we may again wish to discuss the amount of the minimum exemption and the manner in which it has been calculated or should be calculated.

One point I didn't mention, Mr. Speaker, because I assumed that all persons listening to me, or considering this legislation, are aware that there is another exemption and that is a percentage of the salary. That is a person that earns \$2,000 or let's say \$3,000 a month — that's a nice round amount to deal with — a person who earns \$3,000 a month has a much greater exemption than a person who earns \$500 or \$600 a month. One could discuss the justification for that, but again that is in the present legislation; it may also prove a fruitful bit of discussion that can take place at committee level. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The bill will remain standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Kildonan. Bill No. 16 and 17, they will continue to stand in the name of the Honourable Member for Kildonan. Is that correct?

FOX: Mr. Speaker, there's been a change in plans; bill 16 will go at the present time. The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

BILL NO. 16 — REAL PROPERTY ACT AMENDMENT

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 16, an Act to amend the Real Property Act. The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I feel that Bill 16 is one that can be disposed of rather quickly. I find it a peculiar sort of a bill; I find it peculiar that it should be necessary to bring it in at all, because the government has every right in the world to pay the cost of the revision of special surveys, that it's not necessary really to provide what one might consider to be a shortcut of taking money that comes in from one source to the Land Titles Office to give it the opportunity to use that money for other purposes.

Any government, the former government or the present government which feels that it's worthwhile to update, to revise special surveys and to prevent deterioration of the survey fabric, which is the phrase used by the Attorney-General, which I can't help but feel it is a very fancy

way of saying to update and improve the system, that to do that one has to rely on certain fees. If the government feels it's worthwhile the government should do so.

But in this case they're saying, "Well, it must be the Land Titles Office who said, we've given up hope of getting any government to give us the money with which to do this job, so that we will ask that we have greater control over doing it by taking money that would otherwise go into the general revenues of the province."

What this will do is, to a very small extent, reduce the revenues of the province and reduce the expenditures of the province. I can't suggest that there is any particular good reason for doing that. The amount is almost inconsequential, and when I asked the Attorney-General why it was being done in that way — since it could be accomplished in the normal way of payments out of government revenues — the Attorney-General responded, "Well, that is another alternative to the manner in which we are proceeding." And I'm still quoting from him: "We have chosen to proceed in this manner because these are funds that are generated in the Land Title system on applications, to change land from the old system to the new system."

Mr. Speaker, I really want to talk about the principle with which I disagree. I don't know if one could call this a sort of a user fee. The inference I draw from the statements by the Attorney-General is that, well, since the revenue is going to be derived from people who are registering documents in the Land Titles office, it should be used to improve the survey system within the Land Titles office. To that extent, it might be considered a user fee, but what bothers me is the principle. The Minister of Highways is in the Chamber and, as Minister of Highways, I would guess that when he sits in the Estimates Committee of Cabinet, that he may use the arguments, used by his predecessors over many, many years and many, many governments, saying, well, if we are collecting so much money in gasoline taxes, why don't I get all that money and be able to use all that money for highways. But the minister indicates that he is so responsible, that he would never do that.

But, Mr. Speaker, the danger is . . . now, Mr. Speaker, I think he wants to make a speech and he knows he has a right to do so as soon as I sit down. The danger is, that we redirect general revenues of the province into special corners, and they become lost for proper debate within the House or in Estimates Committee. I don't consider that of any consequence in connection with the bill before us, but the principle of the bill is one that I think is worthy to review. I think that it is wrong to allocate certain revenues directly into certain expenditures and bypass the Legislative review process. And that is what I think would happen if the principle in this bill were carried into other kinds of government programs. That is really what I object to, as I say, as a concept. And the Attorney-General said, quite rightly, well, you could do it the way you proposed through general revenues and Estimates, or you could do it this way, that is, the way in the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I think the way in the bill is wrong, but I am not objecting to it; it's not really that serious. I'm sort of talking myself into voting against the bill, Mr. Speaker, and I didn't intend to vote against it, but the more I think about the concept, the more I disagree with it. Yet, I am quite prepared to let it, from my standpoint, go to committee where we can discuss it more fully, and I hope, Mr. Speaker, we will discuss the principle of this kind of shortcutting of moneys, government moneys, so that in effect, it takes it out of the awareness by the government and the opposition of the income and the disbursement.

It occurs to me now, that we should make sure in this legislation that a report be presented annually on the status of this account. As I say, Mr. Speaker, I don't want to continue further because pretty soon I will be arguing against passing this bill and I don't think that it is of such consequence that we should do so, but I certainly think that we may be discussing it much more fully in committee. Mr. Speaker, I would invite more debate on this principle. I am beginning to think that it has more in it in potential than the Attorney-General may have thought in introducing the bill. I think that it should be considered and, Mr. Speaker, I would like to think that some member on our side, or some member across the way, will adjourn debate so that others will have an opportunity to review this. I really think that, although I was prepared to let it pass into committee, it occurs to me that in committee, the Chairman of the committee might well say we are here dealing with this bill section by section and may not permit a discussion of the principle.

On that basis, Mr. Speaker, I would like to invite someone in this House to adjourn debate, so that this could be considered more fully, and to make sure that the Attorney-General has enough time in which he himself can consider the principle involved in what he is proposing so that he can respond later, rather than now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. BOYCE: Fulfilling my usual function, I beg to move, seconded by the Member for Logan, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Acting Government House Leader. .

MR. McGILL: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable 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.

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 Mines, Natural Resources and Environment and the Honourable Member for Emerson in the Chair for the Department of Highways.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY — HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

MR. CHAIRMAN, Mr. Albert Driedger (Emerson): In the Estimates of Highways and Transportation, 8.(a) Aids to Cities, Towns and Villages — \$1,300,000 — the Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, until my colleagues from the north get in here, I might ask if the minister could advise, on last year's, in the left hand column, these were the capital carryovers from previous years, could the minister advise how much has been spent of the totals here? Is that all expended?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

HON. HARRY J. ENNS (Lakeside): I am advised, Mr. Chairman, that it pretty well has all been spent. The decrease just about totally consists of old capital moneys carried forward from previous fiscal years, for such purposes as winter works; capital works; accelerated programs; airstrip development; dock construction; and water systems. These funds were spent last year, the projects are onstream, or have been completed. There has been some transfers now from what used to be under capital accounts into current accounts, such as about \$150,000 involving the continuing operation of the ferry service, \$100,000 transfer to current with respect to aircraft parts, etc. But in other words, some of these original capital accounts that were set up to do specific projects: airport developments; setting up the marine division; the dock facilities, and so forth, those improvements, the infrastructure, are in place and from now on, come in under the current operating budget of the department.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, when we were dealing with Section 5.(b)(1), we were advised that there was gross expenditures here, and I want to know what the difference is on this particular item that's handled by the Department of Finance, and we were advised that if he wanted to get any information that actually we'd have to go and question in the Department of Finance Estimates. Is this the same procedure here?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. ENNS: No, Mr. Chairman, these are pretty straightforward; the recoverables here are listed as available under the Canada-Manitoba NORTHLANDS Agreement. If we look at the items, specifically 8 (a) is the straightforward aid to cities, towns and villages as opposed to the item under 5 (b) where we're doing work for third parties, if you like — hydro, unorganized territories, and what have you, and that's where the accounting procedures change.

The winter roads system is shown in the gross amount of \$1,200,000, unchanged from the previous year, but also shown as a recoverable \$400,000 contribution that the federal government puts out with respect to the winter road construction program. Again, \$400,000 doesn't come to the Department of Highways, it comes to the Department of Finance. Mr. Chairman, you will recognize that throughout the Estimates, the way the finance people have set up the Estimates, we keep paying out the money and any money that comes back, the Department of Finance gets. But it's fairly clear in (b); the budgeted item for the winter roads is \$1,200,000, \$400,000 cost-shared by Ottawa returning to Finance.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, the aid to cities, towns and villages, is this throughout the province or just to northern areas?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. ENNS: Throughout the province, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Vital.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, I believe the minister said that the \$5.8 million acquisition and construction of physical assets for this year that we're in now, will all be spent, or has all been spent?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. ENNS: I'm advised that it has all been spent.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Vital.

MR. WALDING: Would the minister be prepared to provide a list of those projects that this has been spent on over the year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. WALDING: I don't necessarily need it read out, Mr. Chairman, if the minister would . . .

MR. ENNS: Well, Mr. Chairman, perhaps we can start with the winter works ferry landings projects, of which some \$300,000 was allocated. Aircraft parts, et cetera, some \$100,000; ferry parts and grants, grants to the operation of the ferry service, \$50,000; Norway House road upgrading, \$14.4 thousand; and now we're dealing with some old capital which is not being recharged any more.

There is no requirement for it and as such is not being shown and requested on the right hand side of the column and that's why the reduction comes down. Norway House road upgrading, construction and other related costs, and; another \$38.6 thousand capital works accelerated program \$467.4 thousand. I need a further full explanation for that particular program if I may beg the indulgence of the Committee, many of these projects are new to me in Highways. —(Interjection)—These are projects carried out by Northern Affairs that are finished and/or elapsed, funds for which are not being required or requested for the coming year. Aircraft repair and replacement is an item of \$14.1 thousand in there; winter works renewable resources \$66.1 thousand; radio service repairs and maintenance \$4.4 thousand; and there was an old capital authority of \$147.1 thousand; air strip and dock construction, again the air strips have been constructed.

We have under our current Estimates only one new airport that we are constructing at Lac Brochet. This item here is for \$147.9 thousand, airport construction — MOT Minister of Transport — I would imagine that would be bringing up to standard to the instructions issued by the Ministry of Transport; improvements to emergency strips \$128.5 thousand; and water systems upgrading and installation of over one-half million dollars, \$548 thousand — makes up a total of \$3.397 million.

In addition to that you have the, I already mentioned aid to cities, towns and villages of \$1.250 million which remains unchanged and is requested for again. And, of course, you have the winter roads \$1.2 million, which was spent last year and will be requested for the coming year, which pretty well brings up to the Member for St. Vital the \$5.847 million the member raised a question about.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Vital.

MR. WALDING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, will the Minister tell us then what the million and one-half approximately carryover that came from Northern Affairs was spent on during the year or has it been spent?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. ENNS: I'm advised that that is just what I read into the record of the Committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Vital.

MR. WALDING: My question to the Minister, Mr. Chairman, was what the \$5.8 million was spent on that's listed on the left hand side. The Minister gave me a list of items which he says totals up to \$5.8 million. Now I want to know what the \$1.5 million in the reconciliation statement was for and has it been spent?

MR. ENNS: He's talking about the \$1.5 million here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. ENNS: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm told that that is included in that listing that I just read off from projects that have been completed and for which there was capital moneys set aside to the amount of \$1,576,500, for the purposes of keeping the books straight when the transfer or the new organization took place in October. Those moneys came with Northern Affairs to the Department of Highways and Transportation, and are allocated against these completed projects that I have referred to.

MR. WALDING: I am still not quite clear on this, Mr. Chairman. If we add the 5.8 that was approved in the Estimates last year for Construction and Physical Assets and add in the 1.5 million that came from Northern Affairs, we find we have a total of approximately \$7.3 million. Now, has the minister accounted to this committee for the Acquisition and Construction of \$7.3 million worth of projects?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, perhaps the short answer is, the \$1.5 million that the member refers to in the first page Reconciliation Statement is included in the 5.87 4 that the member is referring to right now. It is included in that total figure.

MR. WALDING: Can the minister explain to the committee why it is shown in the Reconciliation Statement since the 5.847 was the actual amount shown in the Estimates of the Highways Department last year and approved by the committee?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, this now includes Highways and Northern Affairs — on the left hand side. This was the amount that transfers over from Northern Affairs to Highways as of that date.

MR. WALDING: Did the amount of \$5.8 million that was approved by this committee a year ago include that 1.5 carryover?

MR. ENNS: It includes that carryover. It is the only way I am advised that we can show it, with that division coming into this area of Acquisition and Construction of Physical Assets.

MR. WALDING: We were also assured by several ministers last year, Mr. Chairman, that no amounts of capital carryover were included in the Estimates. In fact, a lot of time was spent in Estimates in this room, as I recall, trying to find out where that \$30 million was in fact shown. When we came to question the Minister of Finance on it, it was then that we discovered that that \$30 million was not shown anywhere. Consequently, we would deduce from that, that the 1.5 carried over from Northern Affairs, was also not shown. Now, if it was not shown, then how can it be included in the 5.8?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, I indicated earlier to the committee that, in Highways, all capital funds or sources lapsed or disappeared last year. That was not the case with respect to Northern Affairs, and in the reorganization certain amounts of capital were carried over to the Estimates and are being indicated as such. It's Northern Affairs capital that is coming over to us, that's out of their acquisition going back to . . .

MR. WALDING: Let me try again, Mr. Chairman. The \$5.847 million that was approved by this Committee last year, has that amount all been spent?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, that was not what the Committee approved last year. Last year you approved in this vote some \$16,054,000 which included the city capital works grant of some \$15 million. This \$5.8 million now under discussion begins to make sense when you take out the proportion, the \$15 million that was transferred to Municipal Affairs under the reconciliation item of \$28 million plus the addition of the carry over capital authority for acquisition/construction of physical assets from Northern Affairs. It's difficult to follow the arithmetic here but I'm advised that it's all there.

MR. WALDING: Would the Minister give me a breakdown then of the \$16,054,000 that were approved by this Committee under this heading in last year's Estimates Book.

MR. ENNS: Well the major portion of that was the \$15 million that was shown and approved under that appropriation for the City of Winnipeg's capital street project, the new construction.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 8. (a) — the Member for St. Vital.

MR. WALDING: And the other \$1 million, Mr. Chairman.

MR. ENNS: Well, I would have to assume that the other million dollars was principally the amount of money involved in the mechanical division equipment some \$484 thousand. Would not the aids to cities and towns and villages. —(Interjection)— The driver system redesign which accounted for another \$220 thousand and is included and the crushed gravel stockpiles of an additional \$250 thousand.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, the arithmetic still doesn't add up. We have a million dollars there that was approved under Other last year and we add in the million and one-half that came from Northern Affairs that's two and one-half million. Yet the Minister tells us he spent over this year \$5.8 million. Can he make the arithmetic a little clearer to me?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm wondering if I may request for my own clarification, does this come under the 8. (a) Section here or are we further down the line? I'm just trying to get some guidance here. Myself, I'm not sure exactly which area we are discussing here.

MR. WALDING: I suppose I'm asking my questions under the general heading of Appropriation 8. and the amount of \$5.8 million. I could either ask it now or wait until we have passed a, b, c, d, and e but it's all the same thing, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Why I am asking that way is possibly if we go item by item maybe we can get a clarification for myself as well as for members of Committee, whichever way the Committee wants.

MR. WALDING: Perhaps I am looking for an overview first of all, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. ENNS: I advised, Mr. Chairman, that largely due to the insistence of the Opposition that the Estimates do reflect the total expenditure of government is the reason for the current procedure and listing of these Estimates. Those items that I read out earlier to the Committee amounting to the total of \$1,576 thousand on the various projects, the Norway House road upgrading, road construction and related projects, water systems improvements, air port improvements, that total amounts to the \$1,576 thousand which we show in the \$5.847 million here on the left hand side. But we also have to show in our reconciliation statement where those funds come from, and they come from Northern Affairs and are shown on the reconciliation statement to that same amount \$1,576,000 on page one of the Estimates.

In other words we show on the reconciliation statement that the department received or has been transferred over this \$1.5 million from Northern Affairs. We have indicated the projects on which that the money has been spent, under discussion the year just past and is included in the \$5.847 million. I'm trying to get the information correct from the assistants that I have from a finance officer here — last year the Minister of Finance read in detail a statement of these kinds of expenditures which were not yet included in the various departmental Estimates and were treated separately at the insistence of the Members of the Opposition, the Department of Finance, both

in the Department of Northern Affairs and/or — I recall particularly in Agriculture where there was also carry-over funds with respect to water improvement programs, the Department of Finance issued a detailed statement of these projects and their related dollars.

My understanding now is, that has now all been incorporated into the line department's Estimates. That doesn't make it very easy for us the first time around to explain them in the sense that we are dealing a little bit with apples and oranges. In other words in the usual way that members can compare last year's expenditures with this year's expenditures' if you are dealing with the same item then you can readily identify an increase or a decrease or no item. But in this business of transferring from one department to another department and transferring out of capital funds, it makes it a little more difficult.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Vital.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, would it be accurate then to ask the Minister if the \$5.8 million shown on the left hand side of this year's Estimates is made up of \$1.5 million carry-over of capital plus some of the \$7.9 million transferred from Northern Affairs.

MR. ENNS: I'm advised that that is the case, Mr. Chairman.

MR. WALDING: I haven't been able to do my arithmetic quickly enough, Mr. Chairman, but I noticed in Northern Affairs last year there was an amount of \$4.4 million for acquisition of physical assets, if that is added to the 1.5 does that come to the 5.8 that we are dealing with here? Is that where the figure comes from?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. ENNS: Well, Mr. Chairman, in principle the member's suggestion is correct, but the arithmetic doesn't work out precisely in that way because the transfer occurred to several departments. Out of the amount the member refers to that was listed in Northern Affairs, I believe he mentioned \$4 million in physical assets plus — it went to several departments; Mines and Resources being one of them and Highways being another one.

We are responsible for and we have received the \$1,576,000 as indicated on our reconciliation statement. You see, Mr. Chairman, if I could refer the honourable member to Northern Affairs Estimates on Page 62, he will see on their reconciliation statement transfers of upwards to \$6.7 million at the bottom of the page with respect to physical assets and construction. Now, they have been allocated and transferred to several different departments, along with the responsibility that was transferred to several different departments. We in the Department of Highways and Transportation did not assume the total of the moneys or responsibilities that were transferred out of Northern Affairs. We assumed them to the extent of \$1,576,000.00.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Vital.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, but I'm not too sure about it.

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

MR. ADAM: Yes, on that particular point, we're looking at Page 62, the 6,725. and that's transferred out to several departments, the portion that Highways receives would be what's shown on the bottom of the Reconciliation Statement, no?

MR. ENNS: What page are you referring to?

MR. ADAM: Well, you said that there were some funds coming from Mines and Resources at the bottom of Page 62.

MR. ENNS: No it was transferred over, Mr. Chairman, to the Department of Highways and Transportation, and is shown on our Reconciliation Statement, and that figure being \$1,576,500.00.

MR. ADAM: And that is the portion that came to the Department of Highways — the balance of the \$6.7 million went to other departments?

MR. ENNS: Yes.

MR. ADAM: Yes, I wanted to ask, what part of the \$1.3 million, is there any of this amount being allocated to the City of Winnipeg?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, I'm advised that this amount is dedicated entirely to cities, towns and villages outside of the City of Winnipeg, that none of this is attributable to the City of Winnipeg, the City of Winnipeg receiving their similar type grants now under the bloc funding program that is delivered by Municipal Affairs, the \$30 million.

MR. ADAM: None of that bloc funding is shown here, there was some was there not?

MR. ENNS: No, there is none of that money shown here.

MR. ADAM: Okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 8.(a) — the Member for Churchill.

MR. JAY COWAN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like the Minister to break down in more detail where the money is going under this section in Northern Manitoba, by community, if he can.

MR. ENNS: Well, Mr. Chairman, I indicated to the Committee yesterday that this appropriation is made up of many many fairly small to medium, not so large, pieces. We get a constant application from towns, villages and communities throughout the year. We could supply a listing of the previous year's program and make that available to the Committee; this year's applications are only now coming in. I can indicate to the honourable member that there are such requests that we currently have, and applications for assistance in the maintenance of the local streets from communities such as The Pas for some \$70,000, I think \$69,000. These funds are sharable by the community on a 50/50 basis. I would have to defer to your staff if there are requests in from other northern communities that they are currently aware of — not as yet I'm told. This is not to be confused with the aid that is given under Resolution 5 on the opposite page, that goes to the development of rural and unorganized territories, where we also have a 50-50 shared program in unorganized districts, again a sizable portion of it going to northern communities. But because of the nature of the requests, it's I suppose the only way that I could indicate to the Committee how the \$1,250,000 was spent last year, is by asking the department to draw us up a listing of the projects undertaken in the year just past, and it would be a very similar kind of an ongoing program in the future.

MR. COWAN: Yes, I thank the Minister for that answer, and would appreciate a more detailed description of how the money was spent in the past year.

The question I would ask the Minister now, Mr. Chairperson, is if he could assure us that there's no significant shift in priority of where this money is going — geographical shift throughout the province?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, I'm advised, you know and I make this point, any community that has eligible streets — there's an eligibility factor that works in here — we make these improvements to a community principally in assisting them to upgrade their main streets within a community; their business section; their streets leading to their recreational, hospital, school facilities; and any community that is eligible for that kind of construction is free and does apply and make application under this program.

There are projects that have been carrying on this past year at Lynn Lake, Thompson, The Pas, Flin Flon, and we assume that they will be re-applying for further additional work. The limiting factor is there, very often, because this is 50 cent dollars, the municipality has to raise the other 50 percent of the dollars very often it's their capability in terms of their mill rate that will size the program. A community may have a two or three year program of improvement in mind and will discuss it with us, and then tailor it to their budget capabilities in terms of at what pace they proceed. And of course we have to tailor it to the overall restraints of the dollars available under our program. We try to run it on a basis of need, and I suppose to some extent a roster kind of list. We know that we have commitments in from other communities, from other years, that we will try to honor.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Churchill. **MR. COWAN:** If I understand the Minister correctly on this, Mr. Chairperson, there's a selection process that is ongoing and continuing. My question to the Minister— I'm not certain that he answered it in specific — does he foresee any shift in prioritizing that selection process differently this year than in any number of previous years, say in the past two or three.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. ENNS: No, Mr. Speaker, I see no change in this program which has been well received and successful. I can just indicate to the committee that somewhat over in excess of 200 communities applied and received aid under this appropriation last year.

MR. COWAN: Then the minister will supply us with a more detailed list when that's available, I assume then. During the discussion with the Member for St. Vital, the minister mentioned a number of other areas here, aircraft repair and replacement, new airports, water systems' upgrading, the Norway House road which was discussed under this general item. I'm wondering under which specific area we've been discussing each of those — the airports and the water systems' upgrading in particular.

MR. ENNS: Well, Mr. Speaker, I might recommend in terms of a general discussion Resolution No. 9, which undertakes the construction and maintenance activities, northern and remote Manitoba winter roads, airstrips and water systems. Just the following resolution as a general heading it is principally this — it is the responsibility of the Transportation Services Division of the department that undertakes it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 8.(a) \$1,300,000—pass; 8.(b) \$1,200,000—pass — the Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, I wonder if the minister can inform us of any new winter roads that have been initiated this year into new communities in northern Manitoba as compared to last year. What I want specifically is the differences, ones that had been left out, and ones that have been added.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, I'm advised that there has been no change made from the previous year. There are always some requests for expansion of the road system, notably the group from Gillam has been hopeful of getting on to the network of winter road systems. A total of some 802 miles of winter roads are open. I can give a listing of these roads if it's desired. The listing as I have them here is . The Pas to Moose Lake, a distance of some 16 miles; South Bay to South Indian Lake, 10 miles; Oxford House to Gods Lake Narrows, 55 miles; Cross Lake to Mile 45, 45 miles; Mile 45 to Junction of Oxford House, and Gods Lake Narrows, Whiskey Jack to Cross Lake, 14 miles; Hole River, Berens River crossroads, 110 miles; Berens River, Ste. Theresa Point, 160 miles; Ste. Theresa Point to Garden Hill, 10 miles; Ste. Theresa Point to Waasagomach, 7 miles; main road to Little Grand Rapids, 49 miles; Little Grand Rapids to Pauingassi, 10 miles; main road to Bloodvein, 20 miles; Bloodvein to Berens River, 10 miles; Ice Road on Gods Lake, 5 miles; Split Lake to Junction of Thompson, Gillam Road, 14 miles; Garden Hill to Red Sucker Lake Road' an additional 40 miles; Berens River to Bloodvein Road, 40 miles; terminal roads with community and reserve roads, 9 miles; Split Lake to Ilford to York Landing, some 62 miles. I'm advised that the program is has been pretty well established over the last several years, and that there has been no change in general on these roads.

MR. COWAN: I thank the minister for that information, Mr. Chairperson. I'll have an opportunity, I assume in Hansard, to go over it in some detail. I just would like ask the minister if he has received applications from communities not on this list for winter roads, such as the community of Red Sucker Lake or the community of Gods River, the reserve communities or any other communities because of monetary limitations, they have decided not proceed with this year.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, my deputy minister advises me that there is one particular application that we are aware of which wasn't included in the Northern Affairs budget. The name escapes us at the moment, but we can undertake to get the name from the particular community involved. There have been other requests, but not formally made through the Department of Northern Affairs to get on to the Northern Affairs budget — the notable one being the community of Gillam.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 8.(b) The Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: Yes, thank you. I just ask the minister, I know a number of communities in my own conversations that have asked for a winter roads system be expanded into their own community. It's very important for a northern community, such as Gods River, which is a fairly accessible community by ice — as a matter of fact I'm not certain whether or not the community itself is maintaining a winter road from the community of Gods Lake Narrows to Gods River on their own, but if they aren't this year, and I would have to check with them, the fact that a winter road is not going into that community adds and increases the cost of living to residents in that community in many numerous ways. What it means specifically is that they are going to have to start flying their goods in, instead of bringing them in over the winter roads system, which is quite a bit cheaper. I'm not sure of the exact figures. I would have to go back to my notes, but I believe trucking them into a community like Gods River would be about seven-and-a-half cents a pound, and flying them in would be closer to twenty cents a pound. I may be quite far off in that, but I just want to show that there is a significant difference

I have to encourage the minister at every opportunity to enlarge and expand the winter road system to these communities that are presently served, as it does make a substantial difference, a substantial difference in what those projects that the communities are able to undertake in any given year, such as housing, which is very, very necessary in many of those communities. Now there is not enough housing to go around. Some of the housing is substandard, and they are trying to upgrade it, and if they have a winter road that is coming in, then they can bring in their lumber by truckloads and proceed in a much more and effective manner to build their houses. For their own storage of gasoline; they can bring their gasoline over the winter roads, they can bring in their food, their canned food supplies, their staple food supplies over the winter roads. The short winter road season, the short shipping season on the winter roads has a tremendous — how much comes in over those winter roads has a tremendous impact on the total economy of that community throughout the year. And so, when a community like Red Sucker Lake comes to the minister, or a community like Gods River or Gillam, — La Broche I believe was not mentioned in the list to Dewar Lake — I'm not certain whether there's one in there to Dewar Lake, I'd have to go through the Hansard. Broche, I'm not certain whether there was one in Broche. The minister can correct me, I can see him looking at the list — no, there's none going into Broche. These are all medium to large communities, some smaller than others, that need very much the winter roads to come into their communities. I'm wondering if the minister — I know he said it's a stand-pat budget here — as a matter of fact if you take inflation into account, there's actually a loss. I'm wondering if the Minister can take this opportunity to define or re-define his government's policy on the winter road system. Do they intend to expand the winter roads into these numerous communities that aren't already on the winter road network.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. ENNS: Well, Mr. Chairman, I first welcome the support from the Honourable Member who has, of course, every reason for voicing his concern, it covers a large part of his constituency, but it also enables me to commend the work that is being done and being done with growing degrees of success by those persons and people involved in the building of winter roads.

I would read into the record some interesting statistics which indicate that, as communities, that perhaps just a few years ago, and people and organizations, band councils that have undertaken the construction of these roads are gaining experience. And the department is gaining experience in the construction of these roads, while what appears to be a stand-pat budget it does in fact allow for expansion. For instance, and I won't bore the committee with too many facts, but in the year '75-76 to build 767 miles of winter road it cost \$1,627,000. In the year '76-77 to build 781 miles of winter road it cost \$1,707,000.00. In the year '77-78 to build the aforementioned 802 miles of winter road it cost \$1,131,000. In other words just about a \$500,000 reduction has been made possible even though there's been, you know, an expansion of some 20 miles in the actual amount of roads built.

What is happening is that the contractors, and in many cases these are community-based groups, are getting much better at their job, and we're beginning to use better techniques and methods. There will always be the weather factor involved in this road, so one again shouldn't take the stats out of context. A year like this year where we had early and sustaining frost made it possible with less money to build additional miles of roads. But in general, I don't hesitate to compliment the work that is being done in this area, and I certainly think that while southerners tend to question the allocation of a million dollars on what, to them, is a very short-term program, some cases not lasting not more than eight or ten weeks in terms of being able to move goods and freight over them.

The points raised by the Honourable Member for Churchill are certainly understood by me and

by northerners in terms of the impact it has on the entire capability and economic life of a northern isolated and remote community.

I think there will always be that rationalization of where it makes common sense to expend a certain amount of dollars where the amount of freight required for a community justifies that expenditure. I think where the department would be only too prepared to consider applications for expansion or extensions to the existing winter road system.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: There's a number of points in that, Mr. Chairperson. Of course the local groups are to be commended. I had spent considerable time last winter on the winter road system travelling into the different communities and unfortunately for lack of a vehicle this year — and the two aren't related — for the lack of a vehicle this year I haven't been able to get in, but I'm hoping to be able to catch the tail end of the season. And so I can speak from first-hand personal knowledge that the work that the contractors, the communities and the other contractors are doing in northern Manitoba on the winter road system is indeed commendable. It is of excellent quality.

The road system, for perhaps a southerner to take a quick trip over the roads, they would wonder just how I can say that because the roads in many cases are bumpy and in many cases towards the end of the season you tend to sink a bit when you're going over some of the softer areas. But given what had existed before, the road system has improved and improved vastly. And one of the reasons I think that the cost may be going down is the initial cost of developing and putting in to winter road is very, very expensive. And each year as a road gets more and more use, it is much easier to maintain; you need fewer people to maintain it, you need fewer hours on it to maintain it. So I would expect if the number of miles are staying the same or increasing just very slightly, I would expect the cost to continue to decrease where you reach a point of diminishing return where then you will be staying at a certain level. We have probably come very close to it right now.

The Minister went back to '75-76 and mentioned that there were 767 miles built in that year. I'm wondering if the Minister can go back perhaps two or three years, if he has that information with him, to show the number of roads that were built in the preceding years. In other words, what was the change between '74 and '75 and '75 and '76?

MR. ENNS: I can supply some additional information; I just chose those years, but back in '74-75 there were some 886 miles constructed, and in the year '73-74 there were 935 miles constructed. Now, I'm aware that in some instances that need not mean service to any additional communities, but simply the better site location of roads to a community that have proven appropriate to take. In some cases where an original or the first rough trail was blazed through to a community with a little bit more time, in succeeding years shortcuts were found or better ridges were found to be followed that that was part of the case.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is the Member for Churchill finished? — (Interjection) —

MR. COWAN: Yes.

MR. ENNS: I should also add that in '73-74 that figure of 935, some actual mileage of road has now become into all weather roads and have been incorporated into the department's road system, notably the Jenpeg road in the area of Norway House and Jenpeg.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: I'd ask the Minister if the Split Lake road would be one of those roads also?

MR. ENNS: It would be another one of those roads where the department now is assuming the responsibility of building the roads and it comes off the mileage of the winter road system.

MR. COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. So actually we're not seeing a reduction in service in the number of communities served, we're seeing a reduction in the number of roads that are part of the winter road system that are now going into the provincial system and we're also seeing shortcuts and new routes being found. The year '78-79 I'd ask the Minister if 802 miles are intended to be built under these Estimates.

MR. ENNS: Yes, that's the list that I read out which comprises of some ' 802 miles.

MR. COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I would just confirm then that the mileage '77-78 and '78-79 will be the same in fact, 802 miles. I have to bring up a couple of specific constituency problems in this regard, and I'll . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, the hour of 12:30 having arrived, I'm leaving the Chair to return at 2:30 this afternoon.

SUPPLY — MINES, NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

MR. CHAIRMAN, Mr. Abe Kovnats (Radisson): I would direct the honourable members attention to Page 67 in the Main Estimates, Mines, Natural Resources and Environment. We are on Resolution NO. 87, Item 7. Lands and Surveys, (a) Divisional Administration: (1) Salaries — pass — the Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Chairman, perhaps we can return to the question which I asked in the Question Period today, and that is, can the minister indicate how many staff in his department have been terminated by letters which have been received, I believe, only recently, that is, they have received termination notice and where that shows up in the Estimates, if it does show up in these ESTIMATES?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, there are six positions within this resolution under which they were employed, terminated at the end of December. I guess they have been extended until the end of March and we are attempting to find other positions that these people might be used in. It is not known that there will be positions for all of them.

MR. BOSTROM: Well, Mr. Chairman, can the minister indicate more specifically where these staff had been working, what kind of work they had been doing, and what was the real reason for their termination, and if they have been terminated, does that reflect in the Estimates here in terms of reduced request for funds for this department for this year?

MR. RANSOM: Yes, Mr. Chairman, perhaps you would like to discuss that under item (d).

MR. BOSTROM: Well, Mr. Chairman, to be more specific and to understand this clearly, are those the only staff in his department that have been terminated over the past, say a period of six or eight months, and/or are there more terminations that are being planned in this coming fiscal year and if so, where would we find them in the Estimates?

MR. RANSOM: Well, Mr. Chairman, my understanding is here that we are discussing the Lands and Surveys division, and in particular, the divisional administration.

MR. BOSTROM: Well, Mr. Chairman, earlier during the Question Period, the minister indicated that a question regarding termination of staff in his department, could best be brought up in the Estimates, so I am asking the general question, although it may not relate to this section specifically, but I believe the minister did make an undertaking in the Question Period that he would answer this question, and my question is, how many staff in total in his department have been terminated or are scheduled to be terminated, and do those reductions show up in these Estimates?

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, what I said in Question Period was that the Estimates were before the House. If the honourable member failed to raise the question in the previous sections, then I don't know whether you wish to go back. There are other terminations in the Mineral Resources division, but the honourable member didn't choose to discuss those items and in fact, they are reflected in the Estimates.

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Chairman, I will now give the minister notice, that before we pass his Salary in this department, we will want to know exactly the answer to my question, and that is, how many staff have been terminated or are planned to be terminated in this department? Now the Honourable Minister may not answer it under this question; may attempt to cover it up by using the excuse of the particular section that we are on, but nevertheless, Mr. Chairman, I want that answer before these Estimates are completed in this House, and I give the minister notice of that at this time.

He can take the question as notice and bring it back to the House, but we want the answer before we finish the salary part of his Estimates.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, there is no attempt to cover up anything. It is just that the honourable member, in reviewing the Estimates, didn't raise the questions that he should have been raising at the time, and he is now trying to go back and raise them, and because of his overlooking it, I am prepared to provide the information that he wants, but he should have raised those questions earlier. But I will make that up for him.

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Chairman, I believe it is the responsibility of the minister to bring items like this before the House. It should not be necessary for us to bring these items up after the fact. If we have already passed over the Mines section, and he had planned in the Estimates significant reductions in staff for his department then he should have mentioned that during the Estimates. And Mr. Chairman, it's my information that although there have been reductions in staff, they do not show up in the Estimates here. So on one hand we have the minister terminating staff before the end of this fiscal year and not showing up in the Estimates that are before the House. The funds are still being requested for those positions; however, the Minister has already terminated the positions. So I ask the Minister to take this as notice as well. Which positions have been terminated that have not been reflected in reductions in the funding requested for the fiscal year that's under consideration here? And Mr. Chairman, why would he be asking for funds for his department which he does not require if he has terminated positions or is planning to terminate positions? That is my question, and I would ask the Minister to take that as notice as well.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, it isn't necessary to take it as notice, because the only terminations that have taken place have been as a result of the end of programs. And if the Honourable Member had been listening to the discussion that took place when I introduced my Estimates, there was a very lengthy discussion with respect to staff man years and employment, and the Honourable Member's office didn't want to believe that we'd reduced the number of civil servants.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. BOSTROM: Well, all I know, Mr. Chairman, is that there have been unexpected terminations in a particular section in his department. Terminations that those particular staff did not expect and, Mr. Chairman, here is another example of the kind of deceit and broken promises that this department is exhibiting, and it's just part of the overall Progressive Conservative style of government. And Mr. Chairman, I asked the First Minister this morning if he couldn't rationalize his statement during the election which was in writing, during the election campaign, that reductions in the Civil Service would occur through attrition only, and here, Mr. Chairman, we have another example of the deceit and broken promises that this government is practicing by terminating public servants almost without notice. Certainly, Mr. Chairman, without any kind of morality associated with it in terms of letting these people know that their jobs would be coming to an end.

Mr. Speaker, getting down to the specific section that we have before us, I believe we're on (1)(a), Divisional Administration.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's correct — (a)(1).

MR. BOSTROM: I would like to know what is contained within that salary portion; what staff if any are still on strength, and if there are going to be any reductions, terminations or attrition in that section.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, in response to the honourable member's comments about deceitfulness, there is no deceit involved when a program terminates, the people who have been involved in that program in the full knowledge that it was going to terminate when an agreement came to an end, there is no deceit in having that event occur when it comes about.

Now, we have been attempting to redeploy people into other positions as they were required within the department, but if there isn't a necessity to have the job filled, Mr. Chairman, we are not going to hire someone simply in order that they may have employment after their original term of employment had expired. That's the sort of reasoning that the honourable gentlemen opposite

have about employment in government. They seem to feel that it is a the responsibility of government to provide employment to anyone who requires a job. Well, Mr. Chairman, the government cannot be the employer of the unemployed.

He then reverted to the item in front of us. There are three staff man years under that item, and there are three people employed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure if the Minister has provided our side with with a chart showing the division of responsibilities, lines of authority, for his department. If he has, then I'll obtain that from members of our side, but if he has not yet provided that, I make that request at this time, that he provide us with a breakdown of his department in terms of the reporting lines of authority within his department.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1)—pass. The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. BOSTROM: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to know if the Minister has made that available or intends to agree to that request.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: I have that information here, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1)—pass — The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. BOSTROM: Well, Mr. Chairman, I intend to pursue a line of questioning here on divisional administration that relates to the overall direction of this section of his department, which is Lands and Surveys. I would pose most of the questions that I have on this section within this section, since it relates to the overall administration of the lands and surveys part of the department, even though particular questions I may ask fall within the aegis of Crown Lands Management or Northlands Agreement or Surveys, etc., they nevertheless relate to the overall management of this section.

One of those questions, Mr. Chairman, is with respect to the northern housing programs that require Crown lots. They require Crown land in many of the northern communities for housing development, and, Mr. Chairman, the New Democratic government established a policy of making that land available to the Housing Authorities on a nominal fee basis. That is, it would be say \$100 per lot, plus the actual cost of making that lot available. The land would be sold to the Housing Authority to be passed on through a mortgage to the individual in question; whether it was CMHC, for example, would purchase the lot, put the house on the lot and the individual over the term of hs mortgage would pay off both the house and the lot. But the lot price, by policy of the New Democratic government, was established at being the cost, the actual cost of providing that lot to that program. Mr. Chairman, as I recall it, those prices ranged anywhere from \$100 up to a couple of thousand dollars per lot.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to know if this government intends to continue that policy or if it intends to change it, and if it does intend to change it, what changes they are proposing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: That policy is still in place, Mr. Chairman, and if and when there are any policy changes to be made, then they will be announced.

MR. BOSTROM: Well, can the Minister indicate how many lots have been requested of his department? How much land has been requested of his department for that particular program for this fiscal year that's before us?

MR. RANSOM: I'll have to find that out, Mr. Chairman. It's rather detailed information.

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Chairman, there was a program operating under this department prior to the Progressive Conservative government taking over the administration of this department, and I would like to know if they are continuing the program, and this is the urban peripheral program which I'm mentioning right now.

The program was transferred to the department from Municipal Affairs some years ago, and

it had been involved in identifying areas in the urban periphery of the City of Winnipeg that could be purchased and held by the government for recreation or historic or whatever other unique nature was attributed to the land in question. I'm wondering if this department is continuing that program, and if so, what level of funding is attached to it.

MR. RANSOM: That program was terminated, Mr. Chairman, and there would not be any funding in the Estimates before us.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Chairman, another program which was operating under the previous government by policy of the New Democratic government was the Crown Land Classification Committee, which was involved in collaboration with other departments in cooperation with other line departments such as Agriculture and Parks at the time, which was a separate department. Its purpose was to help resolve Crown land conflict and to identify additional Crown land that was situated throughout the province that might be developed to supplement the supply of fodder for livestock and so on, and to also ensure protection of key wildlife habitats in forestry areas. In other words, this committee made up of the various departmental representatives would iron out the conflicts between those line departments at the field level by actually looking at the land in question and coming to a decision as to what it was best suited for. Mr. Chairman, does this committee still exist, and if so, how is it now operating?

MR. RANSOM: It still exists, Mr. Chairman, and it operates essentially as it did before.

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Chairman, while we were discussing the Indian Land Claims' secretary at the beginning of the Minister's Estimates, I believe he said he would be able to provide me with an answer with respect to the adjustment to the reserve at Little Grand Rapids when we arrived at this section in his Estimates, and my question is with respect to the Little Grand Rapids Reserve and their request to have a portion of their reserve exchanged for a portion of Crown land located at Pauingassi so that the land at Pauingassi could become reserve land and give the people who are living in that location status as being on a reserve piece of land rather than not having any status at all as they are at the present time.

Mr. Chairman, this request was made to the department some years ago, and my question to the Minister is, what is happening with that request at the present time? What is the status of it?

MR. RANSOM: And I'll give the same answer that I gave when he asked it before, Mr. Chairman: Was that I would undertake to look at the request. I did not make any undertaking to give an answer before the Estimates were completed, as the honourable member knows. That sort of negotiation takes a long time as a rule, and I simply undertook to examine the situation.

MR. BOSTROM: It's not any real negotiation involved here. It is a simple one for one exchange. One acre of reserve land for one acre of Crown land. It's a very simple and straightforward request. The request was made several years ago, and Mr. Chairman, I'm sure the department has proceeded to do all of the things that are necessary to effect the transfer. And Mr. Chairman, what is required at this time, from what I understand, is the Minister taking action, taking this forward to Cabinet and having it approved by Cabinet. Now if there is a hang-up with the Minister on this particular question, I'd like to know what it is. Why is he not proceeding with it?

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, the honourable member said that their request was made several years ago. My understanding is that that honourable member was the minister that was in charge of this section of the department, and I would ask him why, if the request was made several years, that he didn't accommodate it?

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Chairman, my Estimates are not before this House. If they were, I would answer this. Mr. Chairman, the ball is in his court right now. The request is before him. He has been a Minister of this department for some number of months. This government has been in power for over sixteen months and Mr. Chairman, the ball is in their court and they can't start dodging responsibility.

Mr. Chairman, the request that was made by Little Grand Rapids Dam, was in the process of being put before all of the processes that it had to go through before it came to Cabinet. It was not yet ready to go to Cabinet when I was in charge of this Department. And, Mr. Chairman, if

the Minister does not know what is happening with this request, I'll accept that and he can go back and check on it. But, Mr. Chairman, as far as I know the request is in his court right now. He should be able to take that request to Cabinet and have it very speedily taken through the Cabinet process.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, if the request had been on the table for several years and the previous Minister has delayed over it then he must have had good reason for that and I'll go back and examine the reasons why he delayed and then I'll attempt to move it forward.

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Chairman, I would like to know in general terms what kind of land entitlement negotiations are proposed for the fiscal year before us; what land entitlement of Indian bands are under consideration and which ones the Minister feels that he will be able to accomplish in the year that is under Estimate review here?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, we had a rather complete debate on the matter of land entitlement as you recall under the Land Entitlement Subcommittee and I really question whether we should return at this stage to an additional discussion of that item. I had undertaken to supply some answers, which I will be doing. We must be guided here by you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. BOSTROM: I would like to put my request on the record that I would like to have from the Minister if he doesn't have it before him right now, he could supply it in written form at a later date which would be fine with this side and that is the Indian Land Entitlement and Land Exchanges that are proposed for the fiscal year 1979 and 1980. Mr. Chairman, I'm sure he has a list of them and he could provide it in one or two pages of information either verbally at this point or by way of a written submission later on in this session. That would be fine with us. We just want to know what negotiations are under way and which ones the Department are giving priority to at this time and which land exchanges and/or land entitlement requirements they will be dealing with over the fiscal year that we have before us in these Estimates. So if the Minister can indicate that to us, that he would be supplying that to the House at a later date, that would be fine with me.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm quite prepared to provide a review of the items that are under discussion. I'm in no position to be able to say how many are going to be concluded because that depends to a great extent on the acceptability of the terms and the conditions. Page 41 of the annual report ending March 31, 1978 outlines the outstanding entitlements. I know the honourable member wants to know some additional update on that, and I'll provide that for him.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before I recognize the next speaker, under Resolution 81, Administration (e) Indian Land Claims, this item has been discussed and now that the Honourable Minister has suggested that he will be supplying additional information, I think if there is any more discussion on this item, it will be ruled out of order unless you can hold your questions until we get down to the Minister's salary.

The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Chairman, that will be very easy to comply with since I have no more specific questions on that area at this time. My next question, Mr. Chairman, is with respect to wild rice administration which I believe falls under this section of his Department as well.

Mr. Chairman, I just want to know what this government's policy is with respect to wild rice leases. While the New Democratic Party was in government, we changed the policy to give first priority to communities who are in the area of the particular wild rice harvesting areas and wherever we could, Mr. Chairman, we allocated wild rice leases to the community group or communities that were in the particular area closest to the wild rice lease and/or to the community group that had traditionally harvested that particular wild rice resource. And in the area North of the Winnipeg River, for example, I should say North of the Wanipigow River we allocated almost all of the potential wild rice areas to the communities by way of a lease which they pay a fee for each year and it gives them the authority to control the harvest of the wild rice within that area. And as a rule of

thumb, Mr. Chairman, we used the trapping areas of each community as the sort of resource base under which we would allocate the leases for wild rice as well. It's in there, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. Could I suggest to the honourable member under Item (g) of this section, wild rice development could be discussed and the Minister could be asked questions on it at that point.

MR. BOSTROM: Well, Mr. Chairman, I indicated at the outside of my remarks that I would be addressing most of my questions on this section, under administrations. Since administration is all encompassing and covers the overall administration of surveys and lands. So, Mr. Chairman, even though wild rice falls under that particular category the divisional administration are responsible for directing that activity and therefore I should be able to ask this question under the administration section.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would agree with the honourable member that loosely it could be discussed under administration but there could be other members that would care to ask questions on the wild rice development and if we discuss it at this point, it would not be allowed later, and that was the only suggestion that I made.

The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Chairman, I do not agree that you would be able to disallow an individual member from asking a question on wild rice later. It's simply that if I ask the question now under administration, I will not ask the questions again later. It's simply that I believe that under the administration section that we should be able to ask all the questions relating to the activities that fall within this particular part of the Department.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But questions that are repetitious by any members would be ruled out of order and the other members who would care to ask questions might not be aware of the questions that were asked and I just thought for a matter of expediency that we could discuss it under wild rice development. If the Honourable Minister would care to answer the questions, my ruling would be that when we do get down to Section (g) that repetitive questions would not be allowed. I think it was just in a matter of deference to the people that were not here that I would rule it out of order at this time; if you could keep your questions to Section (g).

The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. BOSTROM: All I can say, Mr. Chairman, is I will not ask the exact same question again. I'm not saying that by the time we get to Section (g) I may not have another question on wild rice which is not the same as the one I am asking right now. But if I ask all the questions that I have relating to this section, and I am satisfied that I've had the answers to the questions that I have asked, I will not be repeating those questions as we go through the individual sections that fall below the divisional administration other than to simply ask a question such as what staff are in the department for that particular section under review, for example.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The only suggestion that I can make, it's a matter of deference to the members who are not here who would care to ask questions, and I would believe that the members who might care to ask questions would be the Members of the Opposition and trying to be fair, I seem to be getting into a discussion discussion on rules here. I would ask that the honourable member please save his questions till Section (g).

The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, your logic seems unassailable to me that when the items come up, that would seem to be the appropriate time to discuss them. If I respond to questions now respecting wild rice and a member comes in and asks it later on, then I simply will be in the position of having to rise and say we've already discussed that and the honourable member will be denied the opportunity to debate it.

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Chairman, I must protest. Because I know from knowing this department that the issues that I am discussing under wild rice do not simply relate to the Item (g) which is the Canada-Manitoba Northlands Agreement Wild Rice Development. In that section would be the particular delivery of the program. There would also be a particular part of the program that would relate to Crown Lands Management because Crown Lands Management is the leasing of wild rice. And, Mr. Chairman, there may be a part of the wild rice concept in the issue of wild rice management

that falls under surveys because surveys have to be done on wild rice leases in order to outline the area of the lease that is going to be allocated.

So, Mr. Chairman, the reasons I am asking the questions relating to wild rice under divisional administration is because different parts of that question fall into different parts of the whole section of this department. And it is very difficult to identify which area of the concept of wild rice falls into the different areas of this department. So if you will allow me to proceed with asking my questions on wild rice, then I won't have to ask in Crown Lands what leases are, I won't have to ask in surveys, what they are surveying, I won't have ask in the Northlands Agreement what their program is in terms of delivery. Mr. Chairman, at this point in time I do not know enough of the answers to be able to phrase my questions specifically in those sections and that is why I am asking them here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The honourable member continue.

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Chairman, the question I was asking is with respect to the wild rice policy of the department. As I said, the New Democratic government had a policy of making wild rice leases available on a first priority to communities, secondly to community groups, such as the Algonquin Wild Rice Company, which I believe holds a number of leases in the Whiteshell area which could not be allocated to any one community or community group, or association of communities. And, Mr. Chairman, that particular company is owned by the Indian people of Manitoba collectively that are involved in the wild rice harvesting.

And in addition to that, Mr. Chairman, the third priority was to allocate leases to companies or individuals that were prepared to go into a lake and take a lake over as if it were a farm, do all of the work necessary to build the crop up in that lake, and to have a long-term lease in order to be able to recoup their investment in that particular lake. And, Mr. Chairman, I would like to know if the department is following the same policy with respect to the allocation of wild rice leases, if they intend to continue the leases to the community groups that now hold those leases, and if they intend to continue to allocate leases to the Algonquin Company that now hold leases, and do they continue to follow the policy of allocating the leases in that order of priority, first to the community, second to the community companies, and thirdly to individuals that apply for lakes that are not already allocated?

MR. RANSOM: To this point, Mr. Chairman, there have been no changes made in the policies. The policies are under active review and I would anticipate that there will be changes made but at this point they have not been announced and I am unable to announce them until they're finalized.

MR. BOSTROM: Can the Minister indicate how many wild rice concessions are now under lease by his department?

MR. RANSOM: I'm advised 71.

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Chairman, as I was indicating there are other areas of the wild rice concept that fall in different areas of this section, and I don't know exactly where this one would fall, so I pose it here now. What is the government's intention with respect to the wild rice harvest that will occur in the summer and fall of 1979? Will his department be assisting the communities in harvesting the wild rice? Will they be active in any way in terms of assisting the communities in planting wild rice, so that there will be a greater crop in the following year? Will they be assisting in terms of organization? Will they be helping out the communities more specifically in the harvesting area by helping them to apply for and obtain mechanical harvesters in order that there may be a greater income to those people who are involved in the wild rice harvest?

I mention these things, Mr. Chairman, because all of these things were items that we were doing when we were in government, and I believe that the wild rice crop is a very lucrative crop. It is one in which the native people particularly, can obtain a good income from if it is properly organized, and if they are assisted in getting a maximum harvest from the crop in question. The best success so far, Mr. Chairman, as I understand it has been in the area of natural wild rice lakes, where the department has been active in assisting the communities in doing a very minimal water control job, just to make sure that the water is low enough in the spring so that the seeds at the bottom of the lake will germinate and grow, and assisting at the same time, controlling that water over the summer period so that the lakes are at a sufficient depth so that the mechanical harvesters, and hand harvesters can be able to take a maximum harvest from the lake. So, with a minimal effort of an interventionist nature by government, a much better harvest can be obtained from the

lakes, much greater income can be obtained by those who are depending on that for a livelihood, and Mr. Chairman, I would like to know what this government's intentions are. Will they be continuing that program? If they will be continuing it, at what level of delivery will they be continuing it?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: As I said, Mr. Chairman, the program is continuing as before. At the moment some changes in policy are being contemplated, but I can assure the honourable member that any changes that are made will be fully discussed with the people involved and there will be no precipitous measures taken.

MR. BOSTROM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am happy with the minister's statements that he will be continuing with that program. I know that it's a very important one to the communities, particularly the ones on the east side of Lake Winnipeg; they're in my constituency, and I would certainly ask him to make sure that he checks with those communities before making any kind of changes that may drastically affect their livelihood in this matter.

Moving on to a different issue, Mr. Chairman, I would like to know what the government's intentions are with respect to local government district land that is being administered by his department under agreements that date back a number of years as they are the departmental responsibility to administer the land and to return any revenues from the administration of the land to the local government districts. Many LGDs have been requesting that the government return some of those lands, some, if not all of those lands to the local government districts. These are lands that many years ago had been sold for taxes in the local government districts and because they were not able to administer them themselves, they turned them over to the Crown for administration purposes.

Now, over the years, Mr. Chairman, many of these lands became allocated to various uses. Some are in wildlife management areas; some were allocated to farmers for grazing; and many other uses. Some have long-term commitments on them. I'm wondering if the Minister has yet been able to address himself to this problem and if he has, what direction he hopes to go in this area of LGD lands?

MR. RANSOM: The honourable member may be aware, Mr. Chairman, that we have already returned some lands to LGDs. Recently there was some substantial amount of land, 11,000 acres, which was returned to the LGD of Armstrong. That was land that was unencumbered. There still are negotiations proceeding with respect to those lands that have been designated for particular uses.

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Chairman, what is the government's intention with respect to those lands that are encumbered, that are presently under lease to community pastures, perhaps to individual farmers for grazing and whatever? Does the Minister intend to honour his commitment — not his commitment — but ut his commitment indirectly as a Minister of the Crown, the Crown having made a commitment to the particular individuals and/or groups in question. How does the Minister hope to address himself to that problem?

MR. RANSOM: We certainly are attempting to protect the interests of people who have leases, etc., Mr. Chairman. I believe that the main line of negotiation at the moment would be based on exchanges with the LGDs.

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Chairman, I'll move on to the Crown Lands Register. The Crown Lands are, I believe, as a responsibility of his department, are maintained in a central registry system. There was a proposal some years ago to make the central registry, to put it on a computer base system. A working group had been established in the department. There were no conclusive arrangements made yet at the time of changeover of government and I'm wondering if the Minister has had an opportunity to address himself to this problem and if he will be working towards the establishment of a central registry system for all Crown lands within the province?

MR. RANSOM: That would be my intention, Mr. Chairman. I'm having some difficulty. My Estimates Book here is not organized in the same manner as the honourable member's book.

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Chairman, the department must have changed their style.

There were two programs in addition to the one that I had asked a question on earlier, Mr. Chairman, that were related to acquisition by the department. One was The Resources for Tomorrow

Program which was to provide for future public access to key resource areas through an active purchasing program of the department in critical areas that were identified by them. The other one was The Alternate Land Use Program which was 50-50 cost-shared with the Federal Government. I wonder if the Minister could indicate what is the status of those two programs?

MR. RANSOM: Both those programs are terminated, Mr. Chairman, the one being a provincial program and the other one being The Alternate Land Use Program which I referred to earlier in the discussion, that had terminated at the end of December, 1978.

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Chairman, following up on that question, does the Minister have any intention of introducing a program to protect key resource lands in the province, to replace the programs that he has terminated?

MR. RANSOM: Perhaps if the honourable member could be a little more specific in what he is referring to by "key resource lands."

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Chairman, the two programs in particular that I had indicated in my last question, The Resources for Tomorrow Program, and The Alternate Land Use Program, were programs designed to try to assist in key critical areas of the province in terms of protecting either resource areas or to make more efficient use of rural lands through a program of purchasing and converting marginal farmland to other uses and stabilizing damaged or misused lands. Mr. Chairman, there was a fair amount of controversy over these programs, but a number of groups were in support of the programs, particularly groups who were concerned with wildlife development and protection within the province. For example, those who were concerned with the depleting deer herds within the province know that one of the key reasons for the depletion of the deer herds in Manitoba is the rapidly disappearing habitat areas. Mr. Chairman, if the government has cancelled these programs, are they saying that they are no longer concerned about preserving habitat for wildlife, or are they saying that they intend to develop something which will replace these programs, which will be an alternative to them? Because, Mr. Chairman, if they simply cancel the programs, they are then not going to be stemming the tide of habitat destruction in Manitoba at all. Even though these two programs were only a modest step in the direction of maintaining habitat, nevertheless they were doing that and doing it quite successfully, Mr. Chairman.

MR. RANSOM: Well we are indeed concerned about the future of our wildlife populations, Mr. Chairman, and I think that we also should recognize that a very large proportion of the habitat in the areas where these programs were operative, was on private lands. I am inclined to think myself that we must address ourselves to that area rather than entirely to government purchasing land.

I do not believe that government would be able to acquire a sufficient habitat to maintain the levels of populations at a level that people might wish us to do. Certainly the concept of buying land for wildlife habitat is not a new one. Wildlife management areas were first started by the Roblin government back in 1960 or 1961 and some of the — to use the honourable member's term — "key" areas were acquired under that program many years ago. But I think now that a good number of those types of areas have been secured and that now it would be advisable to address ourselves to the sorts of programs that might encourage the maintenance of habitat on privately-owned lands as well.

MR. BOSTROM: Well, Mr. Chairman, the Minister sounds like the Minister of Health and Social Development. It sounds like he is going to be doing more studying, monitoring and reviewing of the situation with very little action. The cancelling of these two programs with no real alternative for the replacement of the activities that were contained under those two programs simply means that there will be less activity in the area of maintaining habitat. The Minister can talk all he wants about encouraging private land owners to maintain habitat on their land but, Mr. Chairman, the experience has been that when grain prices go up, farmers clear more land. When they need more land to make the economic unit of their farm more viable, then more land is cleared. Mr. Chairman, as that happens — it may be a very legitimate activity; no one blames the farmer for wanting to make more money — but, Mr. Chairman, the protectors of the public good in Manitoba, the Provincial Government, as a protector of the wildlife resource in Manitoba has a responsibility to try to maintain as much habitat as possible.

Mr. Chairman, I participated in a debate with the honourable member in front of the Wildlife Federation while the election campaign was under way, and I believe he said his intention would be to identify what the people of Manitoba wanted in terms of wildlife and then to work towards

that goal, and to have programs in place that would answer that desire of the people of Manitoba.

Now after sixteen months in government, Mr. Chairman, can the Honourable Minister indicate whether he has identified what the people of Manitoba want in respect to wildlife lands, and the protection of wildlife in the province, and what specifically this government intends to do to protect the wildlife resource in our province. If they are reducing the activities of their previous government by terminating programs that were designed to acquire key areas of wildlife habitat, and to recover marginal land, land that was really in very marginal use as farmland, to acquire that land and to recover it for its best use, which was wildlife use, Mr. Chairman, and the minister should be aware of some of the controversies that occurred over the operation of these programs.

I think that they were courageous programs in a sense that this kind of activity is not popular in the local areas where they are operating. The farmers, I believe, saw them as being somehow encroaching on their rights to buy more land for their farming activities, and I know that members of the New Democratic Party that were in some of these areas came before, I am sure the former Minister of Resources, they certainly came to me and said that the government was buying land that they should be running cattle on and so on. And maybe there was room for multiple use there, Mr. Chairman, but I think the government has a responsibility to be the final arbitrator in that decision, because the wildlife of the province, Mr. Chairman, are not the voters, and therefore in order to protect the wildlife of the Province of Manitoba, one sometimes has to take a courageous stand, has to stand up and say what they really believe in in terms of protecting habitat resource in Manitoba.

And I would like to know from this minister if he has made any kind of determination of what he believes to be the public demand in Manitoba for a wildlife resource, or if he is simply taking the easy route of not having to deal with their problem, of just saying, well, let's leave it up to the private guys to look after the habitat.

Mr. Chairman, we know that has not helped in the past; it has not worked in the past. That's the reason that the provincial government brought in programs to try to maintain habitat, because, Mr. Chairman, this is a public resource. You cannot expect a private person to use his own money to keep a piece of land in habitat, because he is not going to get any money out of that land. If there is a hundred deer on a quarter section of land, that's no money in the owner's pocket because the deer don't belong to him. In fact, there may be a hunting season and 50 or 75 of those deer will be killed, and who will get the benefit of those deer? It will be the hunter that obtains the benefit from those deer.

So, Mr. Chairman, seeing that it is a public resource, the wildlife is a public resource, then the public, and the public through its government, has a responsibility to protect that resource, and what we have seen from this government so far, is a complete and utter rejection of responsibility in this area. They are abdicating their responsibility to protect the public resource by terminating two of the programs that would have assisted in that area. And the other thing, Mr. Chairman, it's rumoured, and I want to follow this up later on in these Estimates or in other Estimates that are before the House, it seems that the government has the intention of selling, not only not bringing more land into the area of habitat development, but selling some of the Crown land that is now within the public domain. And I would like to ask the minister if in addition to not doing anything, he is going to further aggravate the problem by making policies which will allow for Crown land to be sold, which will simply aggravate the problem, I'm telling you, because if the land goes into private hands, you can't count on the private guy to maintain that land for habitat purposes. Why should he? I mean, it just doesn't make economic sense for someone to buy a piece of land unless he is a rich millionaire and altruistic in a sense of wanting to maintain a particular piece of land for habitat purposes. He won't be able to maintain that land for that purpose. It is just like the argument we were having last night about parks. The parks are there for public use, Mr. Chairman. That's why we don't have parks in private hands, because the private person simply cannot get the return on his investment to establish a park for the public. It's a public resource and it's very difficult to establish a user fee that will return the investment to the private person. That's why private people are not in wildlife development; private business is not in the development of parks and, Mr. Chairman, for the honourable minister to say that he is going to somehow solve this problem by leaving it up to the private people, then I say he is absolutely incorrect and he is abdicating his responsibility as a minister responsible for the wildlife resource in Manitoba.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Gladstone.

MR. JAMES R. FERGUSON: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think I would like to take this opportunity to point out to my honourable friend for Rupertsland that during the course of their administration, roughly 200,000 acres were picked up as wildlife management areas. These were

supposedly multi-purpose, and to a degree now they are, but under a court ruling very recently, they are now classed as unoccupied Crown lands. And my suggestion would be that the minister get some of that land back into the hands of the people as quickly as possible, because all we have had done now is add another 200,000 acres to the native population to wander around at large. The idea of it possibly originally was quite all right, and I think that he will recall that during the Estimates some time during the past three or four years, that I asked him about how they would be classified, and one of his . . . or I guess it was the minister who said that they would be classed as occupied. They now under a court ruling are classed as unoccupied.

So I certainly can't see any particular point in the State picking up wildlife management areas. Get the land back into the hands of the people and it is possibly far better that way. At least we will have some use out of the land. It won't be just setting up another reserve.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, I think the honourable member has touched on a very, very important point. His remedy is a real problem to me. Is he suggesting that the way in which we can solve the problem of Indian hunting is to have all the land turned over to private people? Well, Mr. Chairman, I think the remedy is far worse than the disease. It is a fact that the Indian people do have rights to hunt an unoccupied land. When I read, Mr. Chairman, that they had the right to hunt on wildlife refuge area, I was astonished, yes.

Mr. Chairman, does that mean that the honourable member would take the Oak Hammock — and and I want to ask the minister, because he has a serious problem: What is the one near Falcon Lake? The Oak Hammock? Is it a fact, that this year, we are going to have native Indians running on those places and hunting the —(Interjection)— So what you would do is turn it over to the private sector. Well, that is what you said. Mr. Chairman, obviously something has to be done, and I would say that the minister get in touch with Ottawa immediately, that he leave his seat, go into his office and tell Ottawa to prohibit Indians from hunting on that land.

But if you are going to turn it over to the private sector, you are throwing out the baby with the bath water, Mr. Chairman, so I would ask. . . The member has a valid point. I don't want to turn the Oak Hammock thing over to the private sector. I don't want to take all the wildlife refuge areas in the Province of Manitoba, and say we can't preserve our wildlife from the Indians; give them to private people. Get in touch with Ottawa. Have them pass an immediate regulation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The hour being 12:30, I'm now leaving the Chair to return at 2:30.