

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, April 10, 1979

Time: 2:30 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker.

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

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Gladstone.

MR. JAMES R. FERGUSON: Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the first Report of the Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources.

MR. CLERK: Your Committee met on Tuesday, April 3, 1979 and on Tuesday, April 10, 1979 and considered the Report of The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation.

Your Committee received all information desired by any member from the officers of the Corporation and the staff with respect to the Report.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Gladstone.

MR. FERGUSON: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Minnedosa, that Report of the Committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Economic Development.

HON. J. FRANK JOHNSTON (Sturgeon Creek): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the 1977-78 Annual Report of The Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation, and the 1977-78 Annual Report of The Industry and Commerce Department.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Tourism.

HON. NORMA L. PRICE (Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Labour, I would like to distribute the March, 1979 Labour Force Survey data.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister for Fitness and Amateur Sport.

HON. ROBERT (Bob) BANMAN (La Verendrye): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the 1978 Annual Report of the Manitoba Development Corporation.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Mines, Resources, and the Environment.

HON. BRIAN RANSOM (Souris-Killarney): Mr. Speaker, I beg to table a report prepared by the Clean Environment Commission entitled Report on an Investigation of Intensive Livestock Production Operations in Manitoba.

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. HOWARD PAWLEY (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Mines and Resources. In view of the fact that we are commencing at long last to see the beginnings of spring and the snow is commencing to thaw, could the Minister provide us with a updating as to flood forecasts involving the Red River and the tributaries therefrom?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister responsible for the Environment.

HON. BRIAN RANSOM (Souris-Killarney): Mr. Speaker, I provided a rather detailed report to the members of the Legislature on Friday. That is the most up-to-date information available.

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

MR. BILLIE URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Mines as well and ask him whether he and his department have met with municipal officials and what contingency plans are being made for the spring thaw as it pertains specifically to the Interlake and the Icelandic River in the communities of Arborg and Riverton which, whenever there has been a rapid thaw have been virtually flooded by the ice flows that have jammed in the bridges in those communities?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Mines

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, all of the areas, the communities where it is anticipated that some flooding might take place, have been contacted by Emergency Measures Organization, and the usual plans for preparation in anticipation of flooding are taking place.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. SIDNEY GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources. Does the Minister have any assessment as to the present value of the public's share of the Tantalum Mining Corporation which we are 25 percent shareholder of it? Has he any indication as to the present value of those shares particularly in view of the fact that Hudson Bay Company has said that it's a very very good acquisition on their part?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Mines

MR. RANSOM: I don't have that information available here, Mr. Speaker.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, could the honourable member have that information brought to the house so that we can determine how much the Conservative government has cost the people of Manitoba by not exercising its option to obtain that portion of the shares which are now owned by Hudson Bay Mining Company, which apparently is much smarter about these things than the conservative government?

MR. RANSOM: Well Mr. Speaker, that question obviously demonstrates the rather basic difference in philosophy that exists between the honourable member from Inkster and the members on this side, and I believe that we debated that at some length during the estimates. The honourable members opposite look at a situation that exists at the present and assume that that sort of situation exists and would continue to exist no matter what the government involvement is. Mr. Speaker, we would have no difficulty in reviewing whatever information is available with respect to market values. I would be happy to speak to my colleague the Minister of Finance, who actually holds the interest in the shares at Tantalum Mining Corporation, but I do rather expect that the question that's placed by the honourable member is intended to be argumentative.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, if the honourable member will review my question it's the difference in value between the shares that we have now and what they were a year ago in order to determine our loss. I didn't put a philosophical question. I now ask the honourable minister, in view of the fact that the mine was operating very inefficiently and badly until the public involvement came in and that it was the public involvement or during the period of the public involvement and indeed the public involvement, if I wished to become argumentative, that made it a success, and in view of the fact that his colleague in the Province of Alberta considers that public involvement in the oil sands development . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Order, please.

MR. GREEN: . . . will be a good thing.

MR. SPEAKER: Has the honourable member a question?

MR. GREEN: In view of the fact that the Progressive Conservative Premier of Alberta has provided for substantial public involvement and development of the tar sands, would the honourable minister say that his philosophical difference is with me and the Premier of Alberta?

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, the honourable member of course always tends to paint things in a rather simplistic fashion and fails to acknowledge the differences in circumstances that exist in those situations and perhaps the members on that side are ideologically bound in their approach to problems, but I think that the members on this side and the members of this Party and government over the years have taken the basic position that if there are compelling reasons for government to be involved in businesses of the sorts of Manitoba Telephone System or Manitoba Hydro, then they are not ideologically prevented from taking those positions, Mr. Speaker. We do not, we do not take the position as the honourable members do opposite that that government should be in control of the means of production and that that is the best way for society to operate. We reject that, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster with a fourth Question.

MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the honourable member can point to any circumstances where the previous government or members of this government has said that the public should be totally in control of the resources of the Province of Manitoba?

MR. RANSOM: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I am quite satisfied that if we go back and review the Debate that took place during my Estimates as we reviewed the policies of the previous administration and the policies of the present administration, we will see that the honourable members opposite acknowledged that their purpose was to gain control of the development of the resources and a number of the members opposite . . . I believe the Honourable Member for Inkster said, "I'm happy to see that you interpreted it that way because" he said, "I've had trouble convincing some of the people in my caucus that, in fact, our policies were leading to that end."

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

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I don't wish to put another question. I merely, on a point of privilege say, Mr. Speaker, that the Honourable Minister has got much greater success in challenging what I did not say rather than challenging what I did say.

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the Day. The Honourable Government House Leader' or the Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. HARVEY BOSTROM: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the First Minister. In light of the occupation of the Canada Manpower Offices here in Winnipeg by the Manitoba Metis Federation and their statement that of the 120,000 Metis people in Manitoba they face unemployment rates anywhere from 70 to 90 percent, depending on the regions where they live, Mr. Speaker, and in light of their invitation to the Premier to meet with them and to discuss this very serious unemployment situation which they are facing, can the First Minister indicate when he will be meeting with this group to take some action with respect to this very serious problem?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. STERLING R. LYON, Premier (Charleswood): : Mr. Speaker, this question ordinarily, I would imagine, would be addressed to the Minister of Labour who has been in touch on behalf of the government with the Manitoba Metis Federation and is, in fact, today attending a meeting in The Pas with respect to employment and other matters with the MIB. I can tell my honourable friend, however, that, as he may well be aware, that the Provincial Government has been working in cooperation with the Manitoba Metis Federation and others with respect to relocation programs in Northern Manitoba to ameliorate the unemployment situation as it affects this particular group

of our citizens. There's been a substantial expansion of the program in Flin Flon with about 30 families involved. In the Leaf Rapids area approximately 100 percent increase of relocation of approximately 50 families involved is just about to be completed. In the Thompson area the department is in discussion, or I should say the Manitoba Metis Federation is in discussion with the Company and, in fact, International Nickel Company are presently visiting all the native communities, or most of the native communities in Northern Manitoba in an effort to hire employees.

So I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the programs of the government, as implemented by the Minister of Northern Affairs, the Minister of Labour, are attempting to deal with this problem, which is not a new problem, which is one that has been part of the situation, the employment situation in this province for many, many years and, should it be necessary in any way, or if I can be helpful in any way, beyond what has already been done by the Minister of Northern Affairs, of course I would stand ready to participate in any reasonable way.

I must say, Mr. Speaker, however that, and I'm sure my honourable friend would agree, that the occupation, so to speak, of government offices by groups, however well-intentioned, to dramatize particular situations is not really the kind of situation, or is not really the kind of action that does much to assist the problem. I suggest to you that the programs being undertaken by the government in consultation with the Manitoba Metis Federation are much more positive in terms of their actions.

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Speaker, obviously the programs that his government is supplementing are inadequate, or the Metis people would not be demonstrating. Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the programs that the First Minister has outlined, effect only at most a few dozen families in Manitoba, and whereas the Metis population of some 120,000 has an unemployed group numbering at least 80,000 people, will the First Minister be bringing forward any programs in this Session or in the near future, which will deal with this very serious unemployment problem? And, Mr. Speaker, I ask him to define specifically which programs he will be bringing forward to deal with the 80,000 people—plus who are unemployed, not only in the centres, the urban centres of Manitoba, but more particularly in the remote communities in Manitoba, where his government at the present time is doing absolutely nothing to help the unemployment situation?

MR. LYON: Well, Mr. Speaker, I would have to disagree with my honourable friend, with respect to the actions of government. With respect to the general unemployment situation in Manitoba, he has just had handed to him the current monthly statistics from Stats Canada, which indicate that Manitoba today, on a seasonally adjusted basis, has the lowest unemployment rate since December 1976, and that in fact the labour force in Manitoba has increased by 12,000 over last year; the number of employed has increased by 18,000 over last year; the number of unemployed has decreased by 6,000 over last year and I'm sure we won't get too many questions from my honourable friends about these statistics today, as we did a month ago.

Mr. Speaker, that being the case with respect to the general program, I can say to my honourable friend that, as has been said so often by the Minister of Labour, the position of the Government of Manitoba is to try to find in conjunction with the private sector, long-term and meaningful jobs rather than patchwork makework government-funded jobs, which run out, which raise expectations and then run out or involve losing operations, such as my honourable friends were wont to set up in Northern Manitoba at the taxpayers expense.

So I say, Mr. Speaker, that the program of the Government of Manitoba, in terms of stimulating the private sector, seems to be, if we can believe the Stats Canada figures, seems to be working reasonably well with respect to the general population of Manitoba, and I fully expect that it is working as well with respect to the Manitoba Metis population as well, because the statistics that are used by them have not been subjected to the kind of scrutiny that either my honourable friend or others might suggest as being totally accurate, with respect to the figures that are used.

MR. BOSTROM: Well, Mr. Speaker, supplementary to the First Minister. The First Minister, I believe, is not taking into consideration certain factors, and I ask him to consider if, in fact the statistics which he has presented to the Legislature today by way of this Labour Force Survey, only include those people who are on the records of Canada Manpower and/or other sources of the Federal Government statistics, and do not include the people that are living in the remote communities, who are not registered with Canada Manpower because they realize there is absolutely no hope of getting any work, Mr. Speaker, and also the Treaty Indian population of Manitoba?

And I ask him to consider, Mr. Speaker, furthermore, that of these people that are unemployed in the remote communities, that are of Metis status and in the Indian Reserves in Manitoba that are of Treaty Indian status, if these people would not increase the amount of the unemployed in

the province statistically by more than 20,000 or 30,000 people, in addition to the figures he related to us today? And, Mr. Speaker, it makes his government look even worse because they are not doing anything to deal with this very serious unemployment problem.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Well, Mr. Speaker, I can only say to my honourable friend that he knows as well as I do that the statistics that were released today were compiled on precisely the same basis as they were compiled on when my honourable friends were in government, for the eight long years that they were here, and that we're not trying to make anything more or anything less of these statistics.

My honourable friends know what the statistical base is for these and, while it may be true that remote communities are not included in the statistics, there is nothing new about that at all.

But I am saying to my honourable friend, and I realize because of his doctrinaire position he will have difficulty in understanding it, what I am saying to my honourable friend is that this government intends to work concretely and positively in conjunction with the private sector, which is the main creator of jobs in Manitoba, not the government, in order to ensure that long-term meaningful jobs are provided to all parts of our community. And I would judge, on the basis of the statistics that we have seen today, that even my honourable friend, in fairness, would have to admit that that program is meeting with some success.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. LEONARD S. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address a question to the Premier, which follows from his last remarks on unemployment in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, we know that there have been stimulative effects by devalued Canadian dollar and quotas on garment imports coming into Canada, but could the Premier of this province tell the people of the province exactly what policies has this government followed that has caused the stimulus in employment in this province? We know what the federal policies have been; we know what the quotas on garments have been, but what are the policies of this government that have helped the situation?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend gives me one of those rare opportunities to make a short reply, and the short reply, even though some accuracy may be lost in its generality, would be to say this: That the policies that are being followed by this government that are helping to contribute in some way to the environment and the background which is helpful to the labour force survey would have to be described as being almost totally opposite of the policies that were being applied by my honourable friends when they were in government.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the Honourable Premier's reply. I'd like to ask a supplementary to the Premier of this province. Can he tell me when his policies are going to bring to this province to the low level of unemployment that existed in the month of March in 1973, in the so-called "bad old days", in the bad old days of the NDP. —(Interjection)—

Mr. Speaker, I am trying to ask a question. Will the Premier of this province please indicate to us when his policies are going to bring us to the low levels of unemployment we had in 1973 of 4.5 percent, of 1974, when our unemployment rate was 3.7 percent in March; in 1975, 4.8; in 1976 at 4.7. When are your policies going to bring us down to these low levels that we experienced under the NDP administration?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Well, Mr. Speaker, considering the highest unemployment figures that we inherited from my honourable friends and considering that the figures for March of 1979 would indicate that we have already moved back to December of 1976, all I can tell him is that if he waits long enough and has a bit of patience and if this government continues to be enabled to carry out the positive policies of stimulation for the private sector by tax reduction and by the absence of hostility to small business and to anything in the free enterprise system that so typified the government of which he was a member, if he will have a little bit of patience, we may even be able to outdo his figures. And may I say that in 1973, for any government in Canada to have low unemployment figures before the full impact of inflation came along was, with respect, Mr. Speaker, something

like shooting fish in a barrel. Even the Socialists could look good against that background.

MR. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, in many ways the Premier is making my point because whatever good is happening to the economy is happening in spite of the policies of this government.

I would like to ask a supplementary to the Premier. Apart from the interventionist program that they have announced, that is the Special Youth Employment Program which seems to be an inherited, watered-down version of our direct job creation programs, which I understand, Mr. Speaker, is a program tailor-made essentially for the students who tend to be unemployed in the summer, and in as much as there are 12.2 percent of our young people unemployed today — and these are people who are not in the universities or in the schools — can the First Minister advise whether his government is prepared to take any new or special initiatives to give jobs to the young people who are not in the schools, who are not in the universities but who make up this 12.2 percent of the labour force who are unemployed today?

MR. LYON: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I can tell my honourable friend, because it seems obvious that my honourable friend hasn't noticed what's been going on in the last 18 months in Manitoba, I'm happy to tell him in more detail than I gave when I gave the generalized answer about doing almost the opposite of my honourable friends.

What we are doing is this, Mr. Speaker, and I hope my honourable friend, as a trained economist, will understand it, we are trying to reduce the tax base in Manitoba to make Manitoba once again competitive with other provinces, which we weren't under the NDP when we had the highest personal income tax in Canada, the highest corporate tax in Canada, the most penal succession duty in Canada, the worst record for nuisance taxes of any other province in Canada because of their attitude of hostility and confrontation toward any private entrepreneur, any citizen who wanted to go out and do something for himself, because they thought they could do it better. Mr. Speaker, that is what we are doing and the Youth Job Employment Program which we are resuming this year after its great success last year because it employed some 5,000 young people in the private sector, again, not make-work jobs that my honourable friends used to try to tout up and thereby indicate that they were doing something meaningful for the young people. Let me tell him that something like 20 percent of those jobs last year that were provided through the private sector resulted in full-time jobs, not just summer jobs, full-time jobs, Mr. Speaker, for the youths who were involved in them. And the more that we can do to make this province a decent place in which to live and in which people can find money to invest, to create jobs, then we will be doing the very best that any government can do to meet the problem of youth unemployment, which is not unique to Manitoba — it's the problem right across Canada. May I say to my honourable friend that I read only yesterday, or was it today, a headline in the newspaper which indicated that for university hiring and for student hiring and so on, the picture was looking much rosier than it had the year before or indeed even the year before that.

So I say to my honourable friend that there is a combination of government policies that I know are perhaps passing over his head because he doesn't understand the private sector and he doesn't understand, nor do his colleagues, understand what makes this economy tick. And it certainly isn't government intervention. Mr. Speaker, it certainly is not government intervention with the heavy-handed Socialist stigma that we had for eight long years in this province and which we are now blessedly getting out of.

MR. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, obviously the Premier has a very short memory or he wants to forget about certain things.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Member for Brandon has had two supplementaries. The Honourable Member for Brandon with a fourth question.

MR. EVANS: I have another question, Mr. Speaker, because this Premier conveniently forgets that we had a program called Jobs in Small Business, and he conveniently forgets . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. May I suggest to the honourable member that he may be debating rather than asking a question. The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. EVANS: On a point of order, I would assume you would let me have the same latitude in my question as you allowed the First Minister in his answer, which was really a small speech.

To put my question, I must phrase it, to ask the First Minister to think back and remember the criticism we got from this side when the Conservatives were in opposition criticizing our growth of the Department of Industry and Commerce, that it was too big and we were doing too many

things for the private sector. He conveniently forgets that McCain Foods came to Manitoba under the NDP, Tupperware came to Manitoba under the NDP as well.

So my question is to the Honourable First Minister, will he not recognize that under the previous administration there were many programs that attracted many private investment dollars, as a matter of fact at a higher rate of private investment, in most years, than we have been experiencing the last two years.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. May I suggest to all honourable members that we are rapidly approaching the stage of debate rather than the Question Period. I just want to point out to honourable members that we have used half an hour of the Question Period and only five members have had the opportunity of asking questions. Order please.

The Honourable Member for St. Vital. Does the Honourable Member for Brandon East want to ask another question?

MR. EVANS: I would like to ask another question of the Premier of this province, related to his previous remarks whereby he stated that because of their tax policies and other policies, private investment was being attracted into this province and therefore growth was about to take place. Therefore, can the Premier of this province explain to all of us why the Conference Board in Canada is predicting the Province of Manitoba to have the slowest rate of economic growth in 1979 of any of the 10 provinces, the slowest?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting that my honourable friend would allude that the Conference Board of Canada, which last year made a prediction that Manitoba was going to be about the second lowest in growth and so on in terms of private investment, and Manitoba ended up having a private investment, as I recall from the top of my head — I don't have the figures in front of me — something like 21 percent over what was predicted and the first prediction by the Conference Board, I think, was about 6 percent.

Now, the Conference Board also gives me an opportunity to remind my honourable friend that that same organization, obviously whose predictions from time to time are not totally accurate, that same organization, however, in historical perspective, reported in one of their recent commentaries that Manitoba, under the NDP, under the last three years of the NDP, had entered into a virtual recession and that the progress of the economy in Manitoba was now very much better, without their saying it, due to the change in government, and even without our saying it, just an historic fact that the progress of economy in Manitoba right now is very much better than it was under my honourable friends. And he may laugh, Mr. Speaker, if he wishes, but the people of Manitoba won't laugh at the \$83 million less in provincial taxes that they paid in the last fiscal year.

He may laugh, Mr. Speaker, at the fact that Manitoba abolished Succession Duty and Gift Tax Act, while he and his party will not say whether they would reimpose it. But let me tell him another psychological factor that has played a big part in the development in Manitoba and what is happening to help turn our economy around. Mr. Speaker, it is the absence of the old fraction, two and a half times one; that's playing a big part. And I would dearly love my friend from Brandon East, or indeed his leader, to tell us whether or not they still subscribe, as a political party, to restricting the incomes of Manitobans to two and a half times the industrial average, or whatever funny formula it was that they used to have. That's what's helping the economy in Manitoba today, positive thinking, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CHAIRMAN: † The Honourable Member for St. Vital.

MR. D. JAMES WALDING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Honourable Minister reporting for Manitoba Hydro, to ask him if he has an answer to the question he took as notice yesterday concerning Manitoba Hydro, the Manitoba Club and the General Manual of Administration.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. DONALD W. CRAIK (Riel): Mr. Speaker, I found out, first of all, they're both in Manitoba and, Mr. Speaker, I have also found out that the Manitoba Hydro has had a membership in that club for I don't know how long but ten years or more, continuously, paid for by Manitoba Hydro. Whether or not it's inside or outside the jurisdiction of the Manual of Administration, I have asked for a legal opinion on it and when I get that legal opinion I will advise the member.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Honourable Minister for his information. Whether or not the matter is within the purview of the General Manual, the question still remains, Mr. Speaker, is what benefit do the people of Manitoba get out of a membership in the Manitoba Club being paid for by their revenue dollars to Manitoba Hydro. Perhaps he could answer that for us.

MR. CRAIK: Well presumably, Mr. Chairman, the member, if he was really fascinated with this, ought to have asked that question some time ago if he in fact felt that government should be answering that question. As I indicated yesterday, on surface it had not occurred to me that a Minister to which a Crown corporation replies ought to be preoccupying itself with that sort of examination of the operations of the Crown corporation. I am still am of that opinion but I will undertake to determine whether in fact, in the opinion of the Attorney-General's Department, that the Manual of Administration does apply to the Crown corporations.

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

MR. WALDING: With a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I was not aware, before he said that this matter goes back some ten years, and he might be interested to find out whether in fact it goes back to Duff Roblin's days, when he had something to say about this particular matter.

But, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister whether he is now absolving himself of the responsibility for Manitoba Hydro, or whether he is not still the Minister reporting for that Hydro and, being so, can he tell the people of Manitoba what benefit that they are getting from this subscription to the Manitoba Club?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I think there is some confusion here. He is going back to dates under an administration in the 1960s, and that can be checked out but I am sure that the policy applied to the government itself, and I can tell the member that that policy still applies and I presume that it applied during the previous administration. But with regard to the operation of the Crown corporation, I would be very surprised that any administration in the last 20 years has applied that kind of a restriction on the officers of Manitoba Hydro, if, in fact, the Manitoba Hydro Board, in their wisdom or otherwise, decided that their corporate head or heads ought to have a membership in that club or any other club.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. JAY COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Health. Can the Minister confirm that, due to decreased employment opportunities in northern Manitoba, that welfare expenditures in the employable category for the first three-quarters of this year, which is the latest period that we have the information for, increased as much as 40 percent over the first three-quarters of last year?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L.R. (Bud) SHERMAN (Fort Garry): No, I can't, Mr. Speaker, I will have to take that question as notice.

MR. COWAN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister confirm that since January 1st of this year there have been eight suicides and several attempted suicides in the City of Thompson alone, which is an inordinately large number, and that that increase can be at least partially attributable to the frustration felt by northerners, created by both provincial government and private enterprise cutbacks and the lack of jobs and opportunities?

MR. SHERMAN: I most certainly cannot confirm that, Mr. Speaker. In fact I would suggest that, if anything, the suicide rate may be done because of the great feeling of relief since the change of government in Manitoba. In any event, Mr. Speaker, that subject should be discussed and debated on my Estimates, which are before the Committee at the present time.

MR. COWAN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, I would only ask the Minister then to undertake to confirm his last statement that the rate is down.

I would ask the question of the First Minister. Can the First Minister confirm that he has been specifically requested to meet with the Manitoba Metis Federation, that they have asked to meet with their Premier, the Premier of this province, to discuss some of these disastrous policies of

his government and the effect they are having on northern people and northern Metis people and northern people, and that he has refused to return their calls and that he has refused to arrange a meeting with them, and that they are still, as of right now, requesting a meeting with him, that they have been doing so on an urgent basis since last Friday, to deal with this very immediate and very important crisis?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, I can confirm that there have been communications with my office and that the Minister of Northern Affairs and the Minister of Labour, who is the Minister charged with this responsibility, has been attending to his duties in that respect. I haven't the particular communication in front of me but my recollection is that one of the communications was that I should meet with the members of the Manitoba Metis Federation in the offices that they are so-called occupying.

I can assure my honourable friend and the members of the Manitoba Metis Federation that I would not, under any circumstances, accede to that kind of request.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. BOSTROM: My question is to the First Minister. In view of the statements made by my colleague, the Member for Churchill, and reports in the press as late as today regarding the community of Norway House, can the First Minister confirm that the policies of his "regressive" Conservative government are abandoning the people of northern Manitoba to a life of welfare because of the cutbacks in the employment programs that the previous government had instituted, and the various programs of technical and financial assistance to assist communities in northern Manitoba to produce jobs for a livelihood. These have been cut by his government and his government is now abandoning these people to welfare.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, a person would have to be a fool or a knave, or the Member for Rupertsland in order to even ask such a silly question.

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

HON. Warner H. Jorgenson (Morris): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Highways, that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair, for the House to 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 Health and Community Services, and the Honourable Member for Emerson in the Chair for Agriculture.

SUPPLY — AGRICULTURE

MR. CHAIRMAN, Mr. Albert Driedger (Emerson): Committee come to order. I refer members of the Committee to Page 8, Resolution 8, Item 3—pass — the Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I believe it would be appropriate at the beginning of this afternoon's Committee meeting to ask the Minister to apologize publicly to the private people who will not hear who he made certain allegations about in the course of his comments yesterday; namely, one Mr. Max Hofford and Mr. Trevor Hofford.

The reason I state that, Mr. Chairman, is that the Minister tried to draw in a file into the debate in order to divert the attention from his particular Estimates, Mr. Chairman, and in doing so was not able to confirm to the satisfaction of anyone, Mr. Chairman, as to anything having been done that was wrong with respect to that file. He backed away when we asked him to table the file. Now, Mr. Chairman, he accosted two individuals who are not in a position to reply, and I have here two telegrams that are dated May the 22nd — well, one is dated May the 22nd, 1973 — from one Mr. Jim Bowles and I want to read it into the record. It has to do with the question of tabling his file in the Legislative Assembly because of the debate that was introduced on that particular subject by members opposite.

It says here, "Nothing in the tabling of my file would serve any useful purpose or shed any light on what is already known. Stop. I feel my file should remain confidential as are files of all other farmers. Jim Bowles."

I have another telegram, Mr. Chairman, that was dated May the 22nd from Trevor Hofford. "I have no objections to having my MACC file and loan application tabled in the Legislature. Trevor Hofford." Mr. Chairman, that file was tabled. The opposition found nothing in the file on which to pursue a debate, yet the Minister six years later introduces that as a matter of debate. It has been perused by his colleagues, those who were here then. They found nothing, Mr. Chairman, so this Minister owes an apology to both Mr. Max Hofford, who was the Chairman of the Corporation, and to Trevor Hofford, who was the beneficiary of a loan from the Corporation over which at that time it was alleged that there may have been something wrong, but on tabling of the files, Mr. Chairman, the issue was dropped.

So what is the purpose of the Minister introducing that subject into this debate? What is the purpose, Mr. Chairman? The purpose is obvious. The purpose is that the Minister has a problem in debating his Estimates before this Committee. Yes, Mr. Chairman, we have a problem. This Minister doesn't want to debate his Estimates. He doesn't want to debate the performance of his own department, his own actions personally, but would rather divert the debate to something that may have happened some time in the past. And who knows the difference? Half of the people will believe him and half won't. It is sort of the approach of his debating technique in the course of his Estimates review, Mr. Chairman. That's really the attitude of this Minister. The things that he is talking about have nothing to do with the item before us, Mr. Chairman, nothing to do with it whatever.

Mr. Chairman, this morning he was interviewed by the CBC as was I, at the same time, and the Minister didn't answer the question of the reporter, Mr. Chairman. They asked him why he was not appraising his properties, why they were selling properties without appraisals. The Minister didn't tell him why. He just said, "I just didn't like those state farms." He got onto state farms. That wasn't the question, Mr. Chairman. And so whenever that happens, Mr. Chairman, when someone is under questioning, well, it's obvious that they have a problem and that they are trying to divert the attention onto something else.

And that demonstrates fully, Mr. Chairman, that this Minister has not been honest with this Committee. Mr. Chairman, this Minister has not been honest with this Committee, he has attempted to skate around the issue. —(Interjection)— Yes, has attempted a bit of name-calling and has attempted to defame people who are innocent with respect to the discussion that was here yesterday and the day before, had nothing to do with it, and have always been innocent with respect to their participation in public programming, as far as any wrongdoing is concerned.

So, Mr. Chairman, I ask the Minister that if he has an ounce of credibility, if he has a degree of compassion and fair play, then he owes it to two people that he withdraw those allegations and make a public apology.

Well, Mr. Chairman, we have given the Minister an opportunity to withdraw some of the statements that he has made. I then ask him whether he is prepared to table with us the files that were denied to the Assembly several years ago on the express wishes of the client involved. Is he now prepared to table those files, since he has made some allegations and which he is unprepared to withdraw those comments, and which have affected certain people who shouldn't be involved in this debate, whatever, Mr. Chairman? Is he prepared to table those files for the benefit of this Committee?

MR. DOWNEY: I dealt with that, Mr. Chairman.

MR. USKIW: No, he didn't. Well, Mr. Chairman, last night when the Committee rose, I made a point of asking the Minister whether he would be prepared to table those files, and the Minister's reply was that he would take that under consideration. He has had an opportunity to consider the matter. I would like him to tell us whether he is prepared to table those files or not, so that we know.

MR. DOWNEY: As I said, Mr. Chairman, I've dealt with that.

MR. USKIW: No, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, if you wish we can dig up Hansard as soon as it becomes available. The Minister clearly told this Committee that he would take that matter under consideration, and we now ask him whether he has considered the matter and whether he's prepared to tell us whether that file will be tabled for the perusal of this Committee?

MR. DOWNEY: Well, Mr. Chairman, as the member just said, he's supporting that I've dealt with it.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, the issue is whether the Minister has had enough time to consider the matter that he took under advisement yesterday evening. Has he considered the matter; is he still considering the matter; or is he prepared to tell us what his position is with respect to the filing of that report — tabling of the Bowles' file?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I'm sure he doesn't like repetition any more than I do, and I've said I've dealt with it and that's my answer.

MR. USKIW: Yes. Could the Minister now explain to us how he has dealt with that question, Mr. Chairman?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I said I would consider it.

MR. USKIW: Is the Minister saying that he would like us to set aside this Item of discussion and to proceed to other Items of discussion because he is not yet certain as to what he intends to do with respect to that Item?

MR. DOWNEY: No, Mr. Chairman, I don't feel there's any need to set this Item aside.

MR. USKIW: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Then, in light of that, is the Minister telling us that he does not intend to furnish this Committee with the answer to that question?

MR. DOWNEY: No, Mr. Chairman, as I said, I've dealt with it.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I ask this Minister how much time he needs to consider that question?

MR. DOWNEY: Well, Mr. Chairman, again that will be up to me to make that decision.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, obviously the Minister doesn't want that file tabled during the course of this Committee meeting. Obviously this Minister feels that that action might in some way, might in some way embarrass himself. That is the only conclusion that I can come to, unless the Minister's prepared to tell us why he is unable to at this point give us the information. Is the Minister in a position to tell us why he needs more time?

MR. DOWNEY: Well, Mr. Chairman, to avoid being repetitious and to go back to the position that I took last night that I would give consideration to it, he has indicated a telegram here today that that individual did not want it tabled. Mr. Chairman, that could be one of the considerations that are given. One of the other considerations that I have to take into account is that when the individual had an opportunity, or should have had an opportunity, or in fact was deprived of an opportunity of going before the Board at that time to put the information forward to the Committee, he was refused the opportunity to, so I don't feel that at this particular point that information should be tabled to any Committee. He was not afforded the opportunity of the day, that particular time, to put that information forward.

MR. USKIW: Did the Minister contact the person in question to determine whether or not he was willing to have his file tabled?

MR. DOWNEY: No, Mr. Chairman, the file that we're referring to has nothing to do with the debate that we are debating here . . .

MR. USKIW: Well, that's what I thought.

MR. DOWNEY: . . . it was the principle . . . Well, he agrees, Mr. Chairman. I was the principle of the operation of the Board of Directors of the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation, not the content of any files, and for him to continue on with the repetition requests of information; we have dealt with MACC, Mr. Chairman, I think that as far as we're concerned we're here to debate the new programs of Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation. We have discussed the sales over and over again, and our policy as it relates to the sale of the surplus lands of Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation. We're carrying on with the program which in fact the last government had, and that's allowing the individuals the option to purchase the land they are leasing at the cost to the

corporation, plus the carrying charges, hand-picked by the past government.

Mr. Chairman, I have laid our position very plain and put it very straightforward that we are selling the land that is surplus to the corporation on an open public tender system, that all Manitobans are having the opportunity to establish the market price. We're recovering the cost to the corporation plus the carrying charges, and that is government policy. To go into any further repetition I think would be meaningless to the Committee and to the people of Manitoba.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, the Minister now tells us that the Bowles file is really not relevant to this discussion; that's what he is telling us. Can I ask him now why he introduced the file to this debate yesterday if it is not relevant?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I did not introduce the Bowles file; I introduced the performance of the past Board of Directors of Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, the record speaks for itself. We all know what was discussed here yesterday and the fact that this Minister introduced some remarks that didn't properly describe events as they occurred several years ago, tried to bring into disrepute certain innocent parties and therefore it is an obligation, Mr. Chairman, on the part of this Minister to make a correction. If he has nothing on which to base those allegations, then he should say so, so that this cloud doesn't hang over these people, Mr. Chairman. If the Minister has something, please file it. We would like to know what it is. We would like to know what it is.

MR. DOWNEY: Well, Mr. Chairman, again, I have dealt with that item.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, the Minister can make all the cheap shots that he wants, but if he isn't prepared to back up his statements then we're wasting our time even debating his Estimates, because whatever he says has no credibility anyway. Yes, whatever he suggests, whatever he tells us has no basis for credibility. That's the position he has put himself in with respect to the consideration of his Estimates, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, the Minister, again, just a moment ago, said that this particular client was not able to meet with the Board of Directors several years ago, along with his legal counsel — I believe that I'm quoting him correctly. He nods his head that that is so, yes. Would this Minister tell me and this Committee who the legal counsel was, Mr. Chairman?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I would have to check that out. That is the information that

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, the Minister now has to check something else out. Well, I will help him out because there was no legal counsel with the client. There was no legal counsel with the client. And the person that was with him had no legal training whatever. I don't know what his relationship was, Mr. Chairman, but at best it was suspect. At best it was suspect, Mr. Chairman. And, Mr. Chairman, the Minister wants to suggest to us that there was something wrong because the Board of Directors didn't want to meet with a Mr. Nobody to discuss the Bowles' file. Yes. Mr. Chairman, the Minister yesterday also suggested that there were certain numbers of parcels of land that were bought by the Corporation where there was a deviation from the normal practice of asking for land acquisition recommendations. Would the Minister tell me how many parcels were bought that way?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I don't know the exact number but I know there are some. I've checked that far.

MR. USKIW: Was it three?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, the information that I have is that it's several.

MR. USKIW: Several, out of several hundred. Out of several hundred, I see. Would the Minister be prepared to table with this Committee copies of those transactions where the opinion of the Land Acquisition Branch was not sought?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I did not say that the Land Acquisition opinion was not sought. I said the purchase price did not always conform with the Land Acquisition Branch.

MR. USKIW: Would the Minister then agree to furnish to this Committee all of those transactions for our perusal?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, as far as the debate of the Committee I could provide some of them. I don't think it would be important to provide them all but I could provide some of them.

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, I did not ask for some of them. The Minister is trying to make a point — I don't think he has a point — but he's trying to make a point, and I want it clarified.

A MEMBER: We want to know.

MR. USKIW: Yes' this Committee has a right to know. The Minister's made certain statements. He should back them up one way or the other as to whether there was anything wrong with them. He hasn't said that, Mr. Chairman. I now ask the Minister, was there anything wrong with those acquisitions in his opinion?

MR. DOWNEY: No, Mr. Chairman, I did not indicate that.

MR. USKIW: Oh. Well, Mr. Chairman, I would like to know why the Minister introduced the subject in the first place if there was nothing wrong with it. He is not alleging anything wrong, Mr. Chairman.

Well, Mr. Chairman, we know how this Minister operates, Mr. Chairman. He does not intend to operate with an ounce of credibility. That is his mode of operation. That is his privilege, Mr. Chairman, but we know where he sits.

Mr. Chairman, the Minister tried to introduce into the debate yesterday that somehow the previous government deviated from their policy of concurring with land values, current land values, in that they allowed the lessee to purchase those leased lands at the price of the cost of the Corporation, and he thought that was a deviation. He was trying to make a point of that. Well, Mr. Chairman, perhaps the Minister doesn't understand, perhaps he doesn't want to understand, what the whole purpose of the Land Lease Program was. Surely he wouldn't expect us to introduce a program that had major social policy implications in a way that would, Mr. Chairman, give the benefits to those who didn't need the benefits. —(Interjection)— Yes, the Minister alleges that the best way to handle this is to put them up for tender. That's what he alleges. And that is true if you're looking for a market position, that is true. If you're looking for a social position, that is not true Mr. Chairman, that is not true. If you are trying to help a certain sector of the economy, then it's reasonable to have special provisions in order that you may restrict the availability of what would be a scarce commodity to those groups, based on criteria that is established in advance, that require that kind of assistance, Mr. Chairman. That's what Land Lease was all about. We were dealing with people who didn't have the wherewithal to purchase land, and therefore we gave them an opportunity to get themselves into agriculture without having to put up the high capital front-end costs that would otherwise be required. And once you do that, Mr. Chairman — yes, you can do it by tender and that's obvious, because if you did it by tender you would have the richest people picking up the land again which would be counter-productive as far as the program is concerned. It would be contradiction.

And so, yes, there were criteria established and they were revised from time to time, that if a person had certain assets they were entitled to participate in the program, but if their assets were beyond a certain level that they would not be entitled, and the assumption was that they were in a position to pretty well look after their own needs and they didn't need that kind of social support, Mr. Chairman, and that's reasonable.

But, Mr. Chairman, this government, this Minister, they also have a social program, Mr. Chairman. Their social program is for those that already have too much. Yes, they have a social program, for those that have too much.

Is it correct, Mr. Chairman, I ask the Minister, that there are people who have purchased some of these lands who are residents of Winnipeg, may or may not have an agricultural interest, is that correct?

MR. DOWNEY: I believe the address indicates that on the Order-in-Council.

MR. USKIW: Is that correct, is the question I have, Mr. Chairman?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, what their address is and their residence I would think would be the same thing, and without checking that out in more detail I really couldn't confirm that that is where they live. I would assume that is where they live.

MR. USKIW: My question is, whether or not anyone could buy this property, whether they were urban or rural, provided that they sent in the highest bid? Is that correct?

MR. DOWNEY: That is correct, Mr. Chairman. It was opened up for sale for all Manitobans. We don't, Mr. Chairman, divide the people of Manitoba. They might want to move out to be a farmer.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, will the Minister confirm that one or more of these sales, one or more of these parcels was sold to a person who already has some 50 or 60 quarters of land? Would the minister confirm or deny that?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I cannot confirm or deny that and I don't think it is of interest to the government to be of concern of that.

MR. USKIW: Well, you see, Mr. Chairman, the minister has confirmed what I said. This minister and this government has no particular policy and they don't care who it is that is established on the land; they don't care whether or not there are people in the local area where the land is being sold that have a desperate need for more land resources, that doesn't bother them at all. If someone has a million acres, so what, we'll sell them another couple of hundred thousand. —(Interjection)— Yes, that is the policy of this government, and -, this minister has admitted that, Mr. Chairman. That is a policy, Mr. Chairman, that obviously I wouldn't want to subscribe to, because eventually it results, Mr. Chairman, in only a handful of people owning the whole province eventually. Yes, that's the direction that this minister and this government is taking us, Mr. Chairman. If the minister wishes to enter into the debate, I invite him.

MR. DOWNEY: Well no, I think we just go back to basic principles, Mr. Chairman. The Member for Lac du Bonnet further confirms his support for a state farm program that, where in certain countries of the world, they are unable to feed themselves because of the very fact they are state controlled. We, in the Province of Manitoba, what he has referred to is called freedom — freedom for the people, a free democratic system, and I think that's pretty well understood by the majority of Manitobans.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, the minister makes a very interesting rejection. I would ask him to give us an example within this province, one example of where we might find a state farm in this province? I wonder if the minister would tell us where we can find one?

MR. DOWNEY: Well, Mr. Chairman, the program that I am referring to was the land lease program, which was in fact a state farm program.

MR. USKIW: I ask the minister, where in Manitoba he can find a state farm, farm operated by the state, other than the research farms?

MR. DOWNEY: Well, Mr. Chairman, I again go back to the type of programs which we've seen in Manitoba with the instrument of the Cow-Calf Program that had all the farmers that wanted to participate in the program, to sign their cows up for five years, to enter into a land lease program, which was controlled, rented by the state. Mr. Chairman, that's what I call a state farm program.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, obviously the minister hasn't been able to identify for us one state farm in the Province of Manitoba. I don't know if there are any in North America, there might be, there might be. I know there are some Communistic farms in Manitoba. —(Interjection)— Yes, quite a few, quite a few — in all of North America you have farms that are owned by groups of people, common ownership, yes, that has been with us for probably as long as our history. Well, certainly for the last 40 or 50 years. But, Mr. Chairman, apart from those, who are owned by private individuals, I would like the minister to tell us where, where one could find one because if I could find one, Mr. Chairman, I would advise the Minister of Tourism that we have such a thing in Manitoba, and he would then put some road signs up so that the people of Manitoba would know where it is and have an opportunity to view its operations, Mr. Chairman. It would be unique. —(Interjection)—

It would be unique, Mr. Chairman.

But you know the communes or the state farms that we have, Mr. Chairman, yes, the state farms that we have, Mr. Chairman, as this minister identifies them, are farms that the Member for Lakeside lives on. Yes, oh yes, that's a state farm, because this minister said that if you're leasing land from the Crown —(Interjection)— oh, yes, Mr. Chairman this minister just told us . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The honourable minister on a point of order.

MR. DOWNEY: Well, Mr. Chairman, for the edification of the Member for Lac du Bonnet, I referred to the land lease program as a state farm program.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The Member for Lac du Bonnet. The Honourable Minister did not have a point of order. The Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Agriculture would like this Committee to believe that if the Minister of Highways is leasing land from one department of government, that that is not a state farm; but if Mr. Adam, the Member for Ste. Rose is leasing it from a different department that becomes a state farm. That's really what he is trying to tell us, Mr. Chairman. You know, I would even suggest to you that it's open to question, and I won't pursue it, Mr. Chairman, but I would say it's open to question — no, I won't because then I will fall into the same category as my honourable friend, the minister, no, I won't pursue it. But I know, Mr. Chairman, I know that the Member for Lakeside happens to operate a substantial farm that is owned by the people of this province. Yes, we know that. I'm not sure if the Member for Gladstone still does. I believe he used to do, Mr. Chairman. —(Interjection)— If I'm incorrect, yes, but it's my impression that he did.

But, Mr. Chairman, there are many Conservatives, people of Conservative philosophy, who are operating state farms in Manitoba. We have almost 6,000 leases, Mr. Chairman. Almost 6,000 of them in this province. Yes, and those are the state farms that bother the . . . as a matter of fact, Mr. Chairman, as a matter of fact, we can go one step further, one step further.

The state farm that the Minister of Highways lives on — I don't believe he has the option to purchase that one. I don't believe he has the option to purchase that. At least, not yet. —(Interjection)— Ah, the minister confirms that, Mr. Chairman. The Minister of Highways confirms that he has not the option to purchase his state farm, Mr. Chairman. But the state farms, Mr. Chairman, that were established by the New Democratic Party government under the MACC program all have options to purchase, Mr. Chairman. It's rather interesting to me, Mr. Chairman, to learn that there is something wrong about a farm that has an option to purchase, at least as this minister sees it. But a farm that has been owned by the state from the beginning of time, and has been leased for decades to different people in this province, and we have about 5,000 of those, Mr. Chairman, yes, those are not state farms, that falls into the pattern of Conservative philosophy. —(Interjection)— Yeah, yeah.

Well, Mr. Chairman, it's interesting to find out how this minister defines what a state farm is — what is good and bad in terms of public control — yes, because it's obviously silly, Mr. Chairman, and the minister knows it's silly, he knows it's silly. And because he wants to mislead the people of this province, he's attempting to fortify in every way he can, his argument that there was something wrong with the idea that those people that couldn't afford to purchase land or preferred to enjoy a higher standard of living, Mr. Chairman, as opposed to making those mortgage payments during their working years. Yes, they preferred not to invest their money in land. He thinks that they shouldn't have that option. Yes, he feels that there is something wrong with that kind of option.

So, Mr. Chairman, who are denying the people of Manitoba a free choice? We're talking about freedom of opportunity. Mr. Chairman, this government has reduced the freedom of opportunity to Manitoba citizens tenfold inside of 18 months, Mr. Chairman. Yes, they have reduced the freedom of opportunity for many, many thousands of people in this province, through their policies.

And so we are in a position, Mr. Chairman, to expose most fully the fact that we have a government that is bankrupt of any ideas or policies other than the marketplace will rule supreme, and whatever happens as a result of the marketplace is fine, up until the point where the marketplace starts to fall into difficulty, Mr. Chairman. Then we will tax the people of this province and prop it up when it starts to fumble, Mr. Chairman, as the Minister of Economic Development is now doing with his give-away program.

You know, we are going to have free enterprise. Yes, we don't want government involvement, Mr. Chairman. Heaven forbid, but within 18 months of assuming office we have the Minister of

Development telling us, telling the whole world, that the DREE Agreement is going to save Manitoba's economy. That's really what we have, Mr. Chairman. He wants to be able to go out to speak to the Chamber of Commerce in Brandon or in Dauphin, or in Swan River, and he'd like to be in a position of being able to put his hand in his pocket and throwing out a couple of hundred thousand dollars. That's what he wants to do and that's what this government is trying to suggest' Mr. Chairman, is some sort of free private initiative that is going to make this province tick.

Well, Mr. Chairman, it's a bunch of nonsense and everyone here knows that. It has never happened in the history of this province, yes, or in the history of this country it has never happened that way. It has never happened that way, Mr. Chairman, and I venture to say it never will. It never will, Mr. Chairman.

So, Mr. Chairman, why are we shadowboxing? The Minister should explain to us what his whole concept really is. In the absence of anything in his program that gives us some direction, what does he feel his role is here, Mr. Chairman? Because I see his role as a role of doing nothing, Mr. Chairman. That's how he has demonstrated his role. Oh yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Highways.

MR. ENNS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Ste. Rose on a point of order.

MR. ADAM: Yes, I had my name on the list last night and the Minister of Agriculture says . . .
—(Interjections)—

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please, order please. For the clarification of the Members of the Committee, when we rise at Committee rise, a new list gets established. The Honourable Minister of Highways indicated he wanted to be the first one to speak today and I honoured the Member for Lac du Bonnet. The Honourable Minister of Highways. The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. ADAM: On that point of order, Mr. Chairman, the same point, you recognized me before the Member for Lac du Bonnet had finished. You said the Member for Ste. Rose. Now, you are . . .
—(Interjections)—

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. To the Member for Ste. Rose, the Minister of Highways indicated he wanted to first speaker of the day. I recognized the Member for Lac du Bonnet as first speaker.
—(Interjections)— The Minister of Highways on a point of order.

MR. ENNS: I am more than prepared to defer to the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, would you indicate who are the two people on the list?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The first member was the Member for Lac du Bonnet, the Honourable Minister of Highways, the Member for Ste. Rose, the Member for St. George, and the Member for Virden.

The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. ADAM: Thank you. I still wonder how the Minister of Highways got ahead of me.

Now that you have recognized me, Mr. Chairman, I want to say that I am very glad that last Thursday, I believe it was, that I did ask the Minister to provide us with full and complete information surrounding the tendering procedures and the sale of Crown lands, because it's obvious, Mr. Chairman, that we have opened up an area where there are many questions to be answered, questions that we are not receiving in a candid manner.

Now, Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Agriculture, when I asked him to provide information on the sale of these lands, I believe agreed to provide that information. He did agree to provide the number of tenders that were received and the names, but then he backed off. He is back-pedaling and he is back-pedaling all the way up to Timbuktu. We have seen that last year and we are seeing it again this year. And the longer we sit here the Minister is becoming more bogged down in the mire that he has created himself.

Mr. Chairman, we have heard the Minister say today that it wasn't a proper method of allocating land under the Land Lease Program as it was set up, whereby a great majority, a considerable number

of transactions were between father and son, where the father wished to transfer land to his son. And the Minister is now saying that under those circumstances we should have tendered this and let the son be kicked off that farm, if he wasn't able to compete in the open market. That is what the Minister is saying. Because the intent of the program, as it was set out, was to assist in many cases a father who wished to retire and needed some funds to build a home and have a little bit of money to retire. In many cases they had come to MACC because they couldn't get financial assistance anywhere else, through regular lending agencies, and they came to MACC as a last resort because of a son or a young farmer not being able to obtain financing from the regular financial institutions.

So when the Minister tells us that that was not a proper way of handling it, I would like to know how he would expect a young farmer, who wished to take over his father's farm, not having the financial backing, how would he ever be able to become eventually perhaps an owner of that farm, other than that kind of a program. There is just no way.

I can speak from example where the farmer who lives just next door to me on the same section two years ago had no land whatsoever, and he got under the wire before this Minister scuttled this program. He was one of the last applicants to be approved under this program and he took over his brother's farm, a section farm, I believe, and today he is now farming 1,700 acres. He is a very capable young farmer. He is a hard worker. He has a complete set of machinery, all brand new and he has all kinds of initiative. He told me last year that if it had not been for that program, there was no way that he would ever have got into farming.

So, Mr. Chairman, when the Minister comes up here and starts with his old Conservative rhetoric of state farm, he is way out in left field because he doesn't know what he is talking about. He never did know what he was talking about and he probably will never know what he is talking about if he keeps on in the fashion as he has been this year and last year. I want him to know that.

I want to ask him therefore if he would give me the particulars on the parcels of land that I questioned him about that were purchased, I believe that the agreement went through on the day of the election, October 11 — I'm not sure but thereabouts or perhaps after the election — it may have been in the process before the election but I understand it had been turned down by the previous Chairman of the MACC on the grounds that it was far too excessive. I would like the Minister, if he would, and I think he undertook to do that, I would ask him if he would give us the particulars of the parcels of land that were purchased, I believe, from Manitoba Clothing, a company here in Winnipeg. I would like him to tell me, what was the appraisal value on these farms and what was paid for them? I would like him to advise me if any of the parcels, any of the land in this group have since been sold and I would like him to tell me if any of the lands that are unsold because they are unable to obtain the cost to the Crown, if they form part of the lands that are still unsold? I believe it is in the Teulon area.

MR. DOWNEY: That's been dealt with, Mr. Chairman.

MR. ADAM: No, it has not been dealt with. I am asking the Minister to tell me if the lands that are unsold are part of that parcel of land and if any have been sold? That's what I'm asking him. He has not answered those questions.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I indicated to the member yesterday — he made reference to a certain parcel of land and he again refers to it today — that was one of the parcels of land that were in the mill when the transition from one government to the other and it has been handled no differently than it would have been at any period of time before or after. So it is one of the programs — we took the position that those people who had entered into an agreement with the government, that that commitment would be fulfilled. I answered it yesterday and it is in with one of the parcels of land. I said I dealt with it, and I did deal with it.

MR. ADAM: Would the Minister advise me if these lands are still being held by the people of Manitoba, those lands that were bought and those parcels?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I said I dealt with it and I've dealt with it. I think one of the parcels could have been sold and the other one is still held at this particular time.

MR. ADAM: The Minister is saying then that part of this parcel has been sold. Is that what he is saying?

MR. DOWNEY: That, Mr. Chairman, is correct.

MR. ADAM: One quarter section that has been sold?

MR. DOWNEY: I don't know, Mr. Chairman, the exact acreage, what part of it has been sold. But as I said, and I go back again, I have answered the question. It was one of those parcels that were in the mill when the transfer of government took place. Nothing changed in that transition period.

MR. ADAM: Yes, I'm trying to find out, Mr. Chairman, how much of this parcel of land has been sold and how much is still held by the Crown. Because I want to find out. It is very relevant. I want to find out whether the reason that we are unable to obtain bids high enough so that the balance will be sold, I want to know if it is because the best parcel in the group has been sold. Could the Minister tell me how much the parcels in that group have been sold and for what price?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, the Committee is all aware that when those properties were sold, they appeared in Order-in-Council and they are all being handled the same as the rest of them.

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, obviously the Minister doesn't want to answer. I have asked him to table all the information so that the Committee will know and I know that the people of Manitoba will be interested, and very much so, in what is going on in this Minister's department, particularly since last Thursday when we started to dig out and find some very peculiar goings-on in this department. I would like to know exactly what is going on with this particular group of quarter sections that have been bought, apparently from Manitoba Clothing, for a price of well in excess of \$183,000, which apparently had been turned down on previous occasions because it was too high; it was felt to be too high at that time. I think that the Minister should be candid enough to provide all the information so that the people of Manitoba can rest assured that this department is operating up and above board. I fail to see why the Minister does not want to give me that information because he agreed to give me that information last Thursday, I believe it was, when I asked him. But then he back peddled and we have been back peddling ever since. I wonder what he is trying to hide. What has he got to hide?

Mr. Chairman, listening to the Minister answer questions, obviously he is not anxious to answer any more. Mr. Chairman, in reply to some of the questions from the Member for Lac du Bonnet and the Member for St. George and the Member for St. Vital, which they were questioning on the method of appraisals and the reserve bids, I would like to ask the Minister if the reserve bid on the lands that are sold is whatever the cost is to the Crown, and that therefore becomes the appraisal value, if the cost becomes the appraisal value in the eyes of MACC and the Crown, and the Cabinet, could the Minister advise why do we need an appraiser if all we do is look at the cost on a piece of paper that the Crown has paid, why do we need an appraiser there in the first place if he doesn't do anything? All we do when we want to sell a piece of land, according to the Minister of Agriculture, is look at a piece of paper and say, well, this land cost us \$50,000, we've got interest tied in here of \$5,000 or \$6,000; this is the reserve bid. Why do we need someone to appraise the land if that is the guideline that we have used? I'd like to ask the Minister to answer that question.

MR. DOWNEY: That's been dealt with, Mr. Chairman.

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, I am asking the Minister what are the duties of the person that he has in his office, in MACC, that appraises land. When did he answer a question as to the need of that person in the office, if we use Bill of Sales or Agreements of Purchase, plus costs to the Crown, if that is the guideline for the appraisal value, why do we need an appraiser in that office?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, under the new Land Lending Program for the department, we require an appraiser.

MR. ADAM: What are his duties? What does he appraise, if we sell the land based on the cost to the Crown? What does he do?

MR. DOWNEY: Again, Mr. Chairman, that has been dealt with.

MR. ADAM: Well, Mr. Chairman, obviously the Minister is trying to extricate himself out of the mire that he has created. He has decided that he doesn't want to answer. He doesn't have the answers; he never did have the answers; he never will have the answers. He has proven that last year and he has proven it again this year. So let the record show that the Minister will not answer the question posed by the Member for Ste. Rose on this particular point, why there is a qualified, certified appraiser in MACC, who does nothing, because the land is sold based on the cost to the Crown.

I would like to ask the Minister what percentage is required, say, on a bid price, as a down payment for any parcel of land. Is there a certain criteria as far as a down payment is concerned, if you buy a \$50,000 . . . ?

Mr. Chairman, I wonder if you could ask members opposite and on both sides if they could restrain themselves so that I could address my questions to the Minister. There is too much interruption here and I can't hear myself talking, hardly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please, order please. Could we have one speaker at a time. In terms of interruptions, I think all members of the Committee have been involved in interruptions. The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. ADAM: Thank you. I will repeat my question, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask the Minister what percentage as a down payment is required when you sell land. Is this a variation, or is there a set rate — 10 percent, 15 percent, no percent, 30 percent? What is the equity that is required for someone who wishes to purchase land?

MR. DOWNEY: My understanding, Mr. Chairman, is, from the Manager, that there is a down payment required with the tender.

MR. ADAM: Could the Minister give us the figures of what . . . ?

MR. DOWNEY: I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman. I believe it should be referred to as a deposit. I don't know what that deposit is.

MR. ADAM: I wonder if the Minister could undertake to provide us with more information. I think it should be open and public, and I think it would be of benefit to all the people of Manitoba to find out just how much, what are the guidelines. I don't know what the regular lending agencies charge for a down payment, such as FCC, I think maybe is 30 percent or 10 percent, whatever it is. I would like to know what is the policy of this government in that regard, and what is required as a deposit or a down payment, or whatever.

There might be a deposit. I understand a deposit is part of an agreement to . . . That is, a deposit, and if the fellow doesn't come up with the rest of the money, or whatever it is, an agreement, if he backs down he loses his deposit. But what is the criteria? How much does he have to put down when he signs the mortgage agreement?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, if he is referring to a direct lending program that we have, that has been recently introduced, he would have to put down up to 10 percent of the value of the land.

MR. ADAM: I'm wondering now, the Minister said 10 percent, you know, and I would ask, up to 10 percent?

MR. DOWNEY: No, 10 percent on a direct loan basis, Mr. Chairman.

MR. ADAM: 10 percent. Now, I am wondering why the Minister . . .

MR. DOWNEY: I want to clarify for the Member for Ste. Rose, if he could clarify what he is referring to; is he referring to land that is being sold by Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation or the Land Lending Program which we have in place?

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, I am specifically inquiring about the land. Is there a different criteria for other loans? If a person wants to buy livestock or machinery, or whatever, is there a higher down payment in this . . . ?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, if the member is referring to a direct loan, direct loans, under the

Long-Term Lending Program, the loans may be made up to 90 percent of the value of the land.

MR. ADAM: Yes, I am wondering why the Minister was so hesitant to give me that information when I asked him for it. Maybe he didn't understand my question. Perhaps I didn't pose it in a proper way. I apologize if I didn't, but what I wanted to know was what was required from a prospective purchaser of land.

Could the Minister give us an example or explain to us how the subsidy is going to come into this particular situation? Is there a subsidy program? —(Interjection)— Mr. Chairman, if I may just continue a little bit. If I may just elaborate a little further. What I am trying to get at, is there is going to be a long-term mortgage or loan on a purchase of land which the state will have the mortgage on, the big bad state, will have a mortgage on, and I believe there are forgivable loans, or loan rebates. I believe that is the way it is put here — loan rebates. Could the Minister explain if any of the lands sold, the eight parcels of land that have been in discussion for the last while, will these lands qualify for any of these rebates?

MR. DOWNEY: Only, Mr. Chairman, if the person is a full-time farmer.

MR. ADAM: In other words, the lands that have been sold, if they are living on the land, is that what the Minister is saying or . . . ?

MR. DOWNEY: No, Mr. Chairman, the criteria for the Rebate Program is that the individual, and through any loan of the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation, is the individual's main occupation has to be farming.

MR. ADAM: Could he elaborate a little further on what he means by farming: hobby farming, or 51 percent of his income is earned from farming, or could he be a businessman and does this as a tax shelter, or what is the criteria there?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I'm sure that the intent of the program and the people who are allowed to participate in this program are individuals who derive the majority of their income from farming.

MR. ADAM: Now, the Minister opens up a completely new area. He is now saying that for those members who are allowed to participate in this program, now he is suggesting that there are some who are excluded. The Minister has just said that those who are allowed to participate in this program, a loan program, he is now saying, by that answer he is telling me that there are some that are excluded. Could he tell me who is excluded?

MR. DOWNEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman. The program, Mr. Chairman, is for farmers under the age of 39 years of age. It's a young farmer program to encourage the ownership and involvement of young people into the agricultural industry.

MR. ADAM: So now we are getting a more comprehensive answer from the Minister. He is saying that only farmers below age 39 will qualify for loans; is that correct?

MR. DOWNEY: For the Young Farmer Program, that's right, Mr. Chairman.

MR. ADAM: Does he have another program for farmers above 39 years of age?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, we have a program for them but they don't qualify under the Rebate Program.

MR. ADAM: Now we're getting somewhere. What are the interest rates?

MR. DOWNEY: At the present time, Mr. Chairman, it is 11 percent.

MR. ADAM: 11 percent. Would this be for both categories of farmers, those under 39 . . . ? The Minister nods his head, so I assume that that's affirmative. It will be 11 percent for both the young farmers and the older, the ones above They're not old above 40.

MR. DOWNEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman, for clarification, those under 39 would qualify for the 4 percent

rebate, up to \$50,000 over a five-year period of time.

MR. ADAM: A 4 percent rebate, that is on the interest or on the Capital value of the land?

MR. DOWNEY: That's on the interest, Mr. Chairman. What it figures out to is a total rebate of up to \$10,000 total for a young farmer to enter into farming, and that's calculated out over a five-year period of time.

MR. ADAM: Then the rebates only apply to the interest involved, not on to the price of the land?

MR. DOWNEY: Yes.

MR. ADAM: In regard to the guaranteed loans, the comprehensive loans, I believe the Minister referred to, could the Minister advise if the same principle applies there? I wish the Minister would clarify whether a prospective purchaser of land, of farmland, comes to MACC and says, I want to buy some land, he is referred to a lending institution. Is that the criteria, is that the policy?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, as has been for many years the criteria of the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation, the program is designed to assist those people who are unable to get adequate financing under reasonable terms and conditions from traditional sources.

MR. ADAM: What I'm trying to determine, Mr. Chairman, is how do some come under MACC direct loans and how are those picked that will go through the banks under a guaranteed loan. That's what I'm trying to arrive at.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, those people who would qualify under the Young Farmer Program would put their application in and, if they were under 39 and wanted to borrow no more than \$150,000, would qualify under the Direct Lending Program.

MR. ADAM: And those over 39 and wanting to borrow more than \$100,000, they would be referred to a bank or . . . ?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, more than \$150,000 would be referred to a bank or could go through the . . . Pardon me, over \$150,000 would be referred to a bank loan and could qualify under the comprehensive guarantee, up to \$200,000.00.

MR. ADAM: In every instance, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DOWNEY: I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman. Or an approved credit or lending institute, not just banks. I should have clarified that, credit unions qualify also.

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, when I said banks, I was including all lending agencies. I should have mentioned credit unions because . . . All right, if, for instance now, I don't suppose that there have been any of these lands sold previously that have been taken over by the province, or by MACC? I'll repeat my question, I see the Minister didn't grasp what I was trying to say. This is a new program. Have there been any lands sold that subsequently had to be taken back because of default?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I think the information has been provided for the total length of the Corporation, given last week in questioning.

MR. ADAM: No, I don't know if I'm explaining myself properly but of the lands, of the 15 parcels that have been advertised, that were taken back under a lease that I gave up, were any of those parcels, previous to coming back to the Crown, had any of those 15 parcels been sold and then taken back subsequently? That's what I'm asking.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I don't totally understand the member's question. If he is saying the lands that are in question, that we were referring to that have been advertised and sold, I have indicated they are lands that are surplus to the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation.

MR. ADAM: I'll try again. There are people leasing land under the Land Lease Program. Some

of them have taken an option to purchase. Have any of those lands that have been sold, have any been taken back because of default?

MR. DOWNEY: Not to my knowledge, Mr. Chairman.

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

HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

MR. CHAIRMAN, Mr. Abe Kovnats (Radisson): I would draw the honourable members attention to Page 52 of the Main Estimates — Health and Community Services, Resolution Number 67: Item 6. Manitoba Health Services Commission; Item 2 Personal Care Home Program—pass. The Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

MR. Laurent L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, could the minister tell us how many patients have been panelled and were still occupying a bed in the acute hospitals and what that was for the year ending in 1979, the end of March 1979, and what the total revenue was, including the increase of last March, and also could the minister tell us now what the total numbers of patients that have been panelled and are still in the hospital still occupying these beds at this present time?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, the number of patients panelled for personal care and still in acute hospital beds and paying the \$7.75 per diem numbers 600, 400 of them are . . . That category numbers 600, Mr. Chairman; 400 of them are urban and 200 of them are rural. The member asked me about dates, earlier dates, I don't know that I have that breakdown although at the time that the measure of applying the personal care per diem to those panelled and occupying acute beds was introduced, we at that time suggested a total figure of 800, I believe, approximately 400 rural and 400 urban. That was approximately a year ago. —(Interjection)—. Yes, approximately this time last year.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, would the minister have the total revenue for the last fiscal year then from that source?

MR. SHERMAN: The total revenue for 1978-79 from residential charges for the Personal Care Home Program was \$19 million, Mr. Chairman. We would have to calculate the 9 months of the year at approximately from April through December, or for the fiscal year, the 12 months of the fiscal year (correction), at \$7.00 per day which was \$212.00 per month times 800 reducing to 600 — it'll take me a minute to do the arithmetic, but that would be the sum for the precise category that the honourable member is asking about.

MR. DESJARDINS: Excuse me, would the minister repeat \$19 million, is that what it was? For that category of people?

MR. SHERMAN: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DESJARDINS: During the last fiscal year?

MR. SHERMAN: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Not for just those occupying acute beds who've been panelled, but for the whole . . .

MR. DESJARDINS: That's what I thought.

MR. SHERMAN: No. The residential charges in the Personal Care Program raised \$19 million in 1978-79. Now this 800, or 600 as it is now patients panelled for personal care and occupying acute beds we're paying \$7.00 a day, which is \$212.00 a month for those 12 months — and the arithmetic is what? — \$1.5 million.

MR. DESJARDINS: Yes, that's more like it.

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

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, am I correct in believing that this amount of money is deducted from what the Commission owes the hospital when they settled with the hospital?

MR. SHERMAN: Yes. Yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DESJARDINS: Am I also correct, Mr. Chairman, in believing that the amount of money collected in the Personal Care Home, that remains with the Personal Care Home also, in each Personal Care Home, the revenue from the \$7.75 presently, that will stay, the full amount stays with the Personal Care Home as part of their payment?

MR. SHERMAN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, that is also offset income for the Personal Care Homes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. WILSON PARASIUK: Mr. Chairperson, I'd like to ask the minister... Before I do I'd like to thank him for sending over the information on the Health Centres. I just got it and I'll look at it through the day. But with respect to the item we're on right now, I may not have all my annual reports, but I'm wondering if the Manitoba Health Services Commission has issued, or whether the minister has tabled the annual report of the Manitoba Health Services Commission for the year 1977-78?

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I'm sorry, but I'll have to ask the honourable member to repeat the question if he doesn't mind.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Chairperson, I've looked through my Annual Reports, and I don't have a copy of the Manitoba Health Services Commission Annual Report. I was just wondering if the minister did table that Annual Report?

MR. SHERMAN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, that was tabled.

MR. PARASIUK: Well, if there's a spare one I'd love it, if you don't I'll have to go check somewhere.

MR. SHERMAN: I have a spare one, Mr. Chairman — if one of the Page's would take it over to the honourable member. Thank you

MR. PARASIUK: Thank you very much. r. Chairperson, I've spent the entire morning at the Personal Care Home in Transcona, because I think one of the difficulties is that sometimes if you're dealing personal care homes or statistics in abstract you don't get a chance to really look at the specifics or the detail of what the operations are like right at the client level or at the patient level. And I think that there are some very real and definite problems that I think the minister should be apprised of and should try and come to grips with.

To begin with, the major problem facing this particular personal care home — I've checked with some of the others but this one in specific detail — is the problem of waiting lists. The waiting list — and we've talked about this before — the waiting list for this particular place is two years, and that's a minimum waiting list. In fact, what happens is that many of the people who have come to the personal care home and asked about the possibility of going into the personal care home have been told to apply to continuing care services, where they will be, supposedly panelled and interviewed. And the administrator or other staff of the personal care home have phoned up continuing care a few weeks later, just to see what's happened and that they find for one reason or another these people have not been panelled, have not been put on the waiting list. I think one of the reasons is that there already is a two-year waiting list and people are giving up hope and they go somewhere else or they give up. So, I think that when we start talking about the two-year waiting list — I got the impression that really the waiting list is much larger than that, and it's much longer than that — that the estimate I have is that it might be even something in the order of 50 or 100 percent greater, that is, if there's a two-year waiting list the real waiting list, if one did a survey, would be something in the order of three to four years.

And that's a horrendous problem, and that's a horrendous problem that I asked the minister to look at very closely, because if in fact you are that age, and you are being told that it's two to three years, and you really don't have any hope — I think that has a tremendous psychological

impact on the old people who are coming forward, looking for some type of dignified way of living out some of their later years within a personal care home, which I think he and members on his side certainly would join with members on our side in saying is a very, very important element in society, really caring for its old, in a dignified way, and providing for some type of dignified life. And I don't think it's a cliché, even though it's overworked, to say that society really can be judged by the way in which it treats its elderly people.

And I think it's really quite critical for us now, to start investing more, and paying more attention to senior citizens, because we have a proportion of senior citizens that will be increasing in the future. People are living longer nowadays, people who were retiring at 65 often will be living to the years 90 and 95. That is not uncommon, it is getting increasingly common. We have improved our health and medical system so that the death rate has declined. People will be living to an older age. The proportion of people who are over 65 will be increasing, and I think your statistics have pointed this out — past studies on demography have indicated that in the future the number of elderly people in society will increase. And it'll be compounded, it'll be compounded when the so-called Post-War baby bubble reaches retirement age, then we will have a tremendously high proportion of society that will be over 65. And if we haven't developed the proper attitudes and values within society with respect to the elderly, and if we don't realize that we as a society have to invest collectively or socially, for the dignified care and well-being of elderly people, I'm afraid that in 30 or 40 years we will run into that backlash, where a smaller proportion of the population will have to bear the costs for this increased group of elderly people, who require elderly services, especially expensive ones like personal care.

This change in attitude and values, is very important for us to start developing now. And that's why when we start talking about any type of restraint, I think it's very dangerous, exceedingly dangerous, to focus that restraint on elderly people. I think we are laying the grounds for backlash when we do that.

And I think, therefore, that we should reassess from a moral position, the freeze that we've imposed on, and the past freeze on personal care homes because there just haven't been enough built. I think we should look beyond that as well, at the demographical imperatives and those are there. And I think we should look at the economical imperatives. Is it more expensive to keep people in acute care beds in hospitals than to put them in extended care beds in personal care homes? That's the most obvious type of choice to make, and we find that there are a number of elderly people in acute care beds in hospitals. In fact, one of the things that the personal care home administrator that I just interviewed this morning told me is that most of their applicants indeed are coming from the hospitals. Their crisis applicants are coming from the hospitals, they're not coming through the community panelling process. That is, we have so many people in acute care beds in hospitals, that the doctors and the social workers in the hospitals are putting whatever pressure they can on the personal care home administrators, to take these people from the acute care beds and to put them into the personal care homes.

This has a very dangerous effect, I would argue, on the type of care, and the type of community that can be developed within each personal care home. And that's why again, we need more nursing home beds built. We also have to look, Mr. Chairperson, at the economics of whether in fact society can best provide for these types of needs for the senior citizens collectively through personal care homes, which are properly designed to accommodate senior citizens, which provide a focus for other programs like adult day care, which provide the necessary facility to add on something like an enriched senior citizens home. You cannot have an enriched senior citizens home in isolation, but a senior citizens housing project, that might be built under MHRC, could be attached to an existing nursing home, and the people could live in self-contained units, preferably in couples if these are older couples — and I'll take the example of a couple because I think it's very important — and these people depending upon their need could live independently or if the need required them, they could go down and partake of the publicly provided facilities in the nursing home, for meals, for example, for baths, for assisted baths and yet they could continue to live with some degree of independence and privacy.

This is especially important when you start talking about elderly couples who when they reach a particular stage, you will find that one member of the couple requires the type of assistance that necessitates a breaking up of that family unit. We talk about families as being — we tend to think about them in terms of younger people, but a retired couple constitutes a family and that family unit is very important. It is a very important family unit in our society. And yet it is tragic when a couple in their eighties, where say the wife is able to get around and look after herself completely, has to be torn apart from her husband who can't, and has to be placed in a personal care home to live by himself. The psychological impact of that separation is such that usually the lives of both of them are shortered and that is quite tragic.

Now, I think the way to deal with that is to look for alternatives like the Enriched Housing Program,

tied into an existing personal care home so that you could have the couple remaining together. Now, if we really firmly believed in the family, that is what we would do, that is one thing that we would certainly do. The home that I am talking about, the personal care home in Transcona, has in fact been talking about this now for a year and a half or two years. I again thank the Minister for providing whatever information he had on the subject of the Park Manor Personal Care Home in Transcona, but I find, in talking to the people involved at the care home, that they have been getting the run-around for the last year and a half. Two years ago they were told that they could proceed with an enriched senior citizens housing project, primarily sponsored by CMHC, on the 2.8 acres of free land that exists adjacent to the Park Manor Personal Care Home. They were going to build a 100-unit enriched senior citizens project. This whole personal care home is run by a sponsoring agency, a religious group, that does an incredibly good job. Incredibly dedicated people are committing themselves to the provision of care for elderly people in a dignified way and they strongly felt that this enriched senior citizens project, tied in to the nursing home would really meet the need, especially of these elderly couples, some of whom are forced to split.

Well, after a year and a half of negotiation, they find that the Federal Government isn't coming through with the project. The Federal Government seems to be passing the buck onto the province. The province, not your department specifically but the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation, says that, well, they might be coming up with some type of a supplement program for the senior citizens, but it is on the capital side that this program is being stymied. The reason why I am raising it now in your Estimates, Mr. Minister, is that I think often there is a problem in government in that governments have a very great difficulty in defining problems and that they tend to look at problems solely through departmental eyes and departments, by legislative limitations, or by program limitations, tend to only look at one part of the problem. They only really look at the leg of the elephant or the trunk of the elephant or the tail of the elephant, but no one is standing back getting an overview of the entire problem with respect to the elderly.

I think this is one of the great mistakes of this administration, when it cancelled or abolished the central mechanisms that frankly did look at problems like that. I know that there is a Community Services Cabinet Committee that has been re-established. I know that this Community Services Committee really right now seems to be understaffed. I don't know whether MHRC officials are talking to Health and Social Development officials when it comes to the whole area of enriched senior citizens housing tied into nursing homes. The Minister may tell us that that is the case, but at the field level, at the delivery level, let me assure the Minister that the administrator of that personal care home in Transcona finds that there is no co-ordinated effort at the provincial level with respect to the provision of enriched senior citizens housing tied into personal care homes, nor is there any co-ordination with the Federal Government, Central Mortgage and Housing, which is going to provide the great bulk of financing.

So here you have a sponsoring group in a community wanting to meet a community need, having the land, having the core facility, wanting to add 100 units, and being stymied by the government, being stymied because the government can't put its house in order sufficiently to provide for that need. The tragedy is compounded because they have waiting lists of at least two years and they know that the real waiting lists are probably in the order of four years. Imagine the incredible frustration that must exist within that organization. They want to provide the need and they say, why don't the senior levels of government? I say, Mr. Minister, that that is your responsibility to try to provide that co-ordination at the provincial level and it is your responsibility because the personal care home already provides the core for the expansion of a service that is necessary and needed, where the demand is documented, where the potential for expansion and the potential for dealing with that need exists in such clear and concrete terms.

Now, I raise that as your problem more so than the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation, because he doesn't control that core and the core, of course, is the personal care home, because it is around that fully-serviced facility that you can tie in other programs and that's why that core has to be nourished and that's why the people who provide a great deal of the funding and supposed planning for the way in which that core should be used, have to be the catalysts in ensuring that the personal care home in a sense provides the focus for any type of future provision of need.

I give you that hard and specific example, Mr. Minister, because when we have raised these points before, you have always said, well, give me examples, give me specifics. Well, I give you that specific. It is very concrete and it's very real and it exists if you care to pursue it further yourself.

I said before, Mr. Chairperson, that the hospitals are sending people from acute care beds into personal care homes and the effect of this is to change the ratios regarding levels of care in personal care homes. You know that there are really four levels of care provided in a personal care home, going from the hostel level, sort of Level 1 or just hostel level, and then there are three other levels

of care, 2, 3 and 4, or 1, 2, 3, depending upon how you want to number it, and that each level is almost a quantumly or geometric progression in terms of care requirements from one level to another. So when you go from hostel level to Level 1, there is a fairly big change in care requirements. When you go from Level 1 to Level 2, there is a major change in care requirements. Then when you go from Level 2 to Level 3, you are into a very massive change again where people are really not able at all to look after any of their physical needs.

When those ratios start changing and they have changed in the Transcona one from Level 1 having three people, Level and when those ratios start changing and they changed to the Transcona one from levels of, level one having three people, level two having forty-three people, level three having thirty-five people, level four having nineteen people — when they changed to ratios of level one having three people, level two having thirty-six people, level three having thirty-five people, level four having twenty-six people, then you get a major shift. You're getting a major shift. Because if you have an over-concentration of these higher levels of care in a personal care home then really what you are changing is the entire character of the personal care home from one of a mixed neighbourhood, so to speak, to an auxiliary hospital. And the psychological milieu of an auxiliary hospital is really quite different from that of a thriving personal care home. And I would argue Mr. Minister that what's required is a judicious mix of different levels of care.

What's required is sufficient capacity within the overall personal care homes stock, so that each personal care home can admit people in at each level so that you have this continuous mix of people at different degrees of physical ability or disability. You'll have greater mixing. You'll have older people helping each other out. You'll have older people relating to each other in a far better way. They will feel part of the community. They will feel that they are contributing something, and they really want to contribute. Today when I visited a personal care home I found that older people wanted to get in the kitchen and peel some of the potatoes and the carrots and things like that in the kitchen. They wanted to do it cause they wanted to be part of their own community; some people aren't able to do this but other people are. So, if you have that type of mixture they certainly will relate to each other in a far better way, and my argument is that the system is becoming far too overcrowded and it's going to continue to get overcrowded. It is going to get worse unless we take that freeze off and start building not just a few personal care homes but many more and looking for alternatives.

That system of overcrowding really has a tremendously negative psychological impact on the personal care homes; has a tremendously negative psychological impact on the individuals. When you start looking at particular case studies you will find that in a vibrant personal care home, some older people who have been transferred from hospitals even start finding that they're relating to people; they start doing their own hair, they start looking after their personal hygiene, they start looking after each other; they find boy friends and girl friends, they think that this is a place where they can relate to each other. I think that's very very important. I think we have to see personal care homes as living places. Not as places where sort of people go to run out the string and that means that we really have to invest far more in personal care homes than we have in the past, and that we shouldn't direct the restraint program to senior citizens.

We've had no justification for doing that. We find that unlike schools the population of seniors is going to increase. We find that that demand will exist virtually forever in Manitoba. So that if we build a personal care home today it will have a guaranteed life of 50 or 60 years. It will have a guaranteed demand for 50 or 60 years. It's not a waste of money. It's one of the wisest investments if not the wisest social investment that we as a society in Manitoba can make, and yet we've had this freeze. We've had a small lifting of this freeze, a small lifting of the freeze, but nowhere near the lifting that we require. I think it was tragic in the first place to put in the freeze because it put us behind the eight ball immediately, and I think what you did in putting on the freeze was incredibly callous and short-sighted. I am glad that you have seen the error of your ways and are taking the freeze off but I think that you are taking it off far too slightly. I think you have to open the program up, go out, tell your continuing care people. Let's get an accurate reading of what the demand is. Let's get an accurate reading. Let's conduct surveys. Let's go out and really try and deal with the problem. Let's not try and hide the problem or put a cap on the problem, let's go out and survey the people of Manitoba, the senior citizens of Manitoba, and say we are a province that cares about our senior citizens. We want to know what your needs are and we are going to define those needs and then let's have a debate here in the Legislature. Let's have a debate publicly. Let's fight an election on it. Let's talk about what should the level of care for senior citizens be.

Let's get the documentation about what the need is. Then when we have the documentation about what the need is, let's debate how much we as a society can allocate to senior citizens as opposed to paving roads. Let's have that debate. I know it's not completely one hundred percent of one and zero of the other, but the way it is right now we aren't having that debate. It's not

coming through clearly. We are getting reams of statistics on how many miles of roads need upgrading. How many shoulders should be widened and paved. But we are not getting statistics about how many elderly people are out there, each year getting older and each year without sufficient services or without good enough places to live in. And we've not been given any of that information. The Annual Report that I have is 1977-78. It's for the period ending March 31st, 1978. I guess we are not at a stage where we could get it for the year ending March 31st, 1979. I know that's just ended recently but I would have thought that there might have been an attempt to try and get those out as quickly as possible. Maybe that's impossible. Maybe that's too much to ask. Maybe then it might be possible to get some interim figures for the year ending December 31st, 1978. I know that's some of the statistics that we received from the Minister when he came to the Department of Health and Social Development.

And I say this because I think that we are trying to sweep a very critical problem under the carpet. I don't know whether we are doing it intentionally but that's the effect, if we don't have a sufficient description of what the needs of senior citizens are. That's in an aggregate sense because I can assure the Minister that at the constituency level, the one item that keeps coming up really day after day, is the whole question of providing care for senior citizens. Either the home care or the personal home care or the senior citizens housing or the enriched senior citizens housing, and frankly when people contact me I'm not in a position to say well this is exactly the type of care you need. That has to be done through a panelling process, but it has to be done within a context whereby the people panelling the seniors will have some assurance that they will have some program in place to meet those essential needs. And I would argue that that's not the case right now. And I would go a bit further and say that certain programs which I agree are good ideas, like the Adult Day Care Programs tied into the personal care homes, is even at this stage, despite the fact that it's been announced I think in a Throne Speech, it's still very much an embryo . e

There are no specific forms that the personal care home administrators can fill out. They just have a general notice. I think that the people running the personal care homes right now really are very committed people who desperately want to meet the needs of senior citizens. They are doing so in a milieu which is really difficult to operate within; they are being told every day, cut your costs, and yet they are dealing with a group of people who, it strikes me, aren't selfish, don't have great needs, basically require essential or basic needs. These people aren't looking for special trips here, there or anywhere. They're not looking for tax concessions. They're not looking for gravy in that sense. What they are looking for is basic care, basic food care, nutritional meals — that's probably the most important thing that they can receive. The most important thing that older people need is good nutrition. And to do that they have to get good food. And what happens with older people is that often they don't cook good enough meals for themselves. They get tired, they get bored, they get listless. That's why so many of them really pick up physically and mentally when they move into a personal care home because they start getting some good meals.

Now, one of the things that has been cut in personal care homes, by some administrations, has been the quality of the nutrition. I think that one of the reasons for that is that it is possibly one that certain administrators feel they can get away with cuts in. What they start doing is they start cutting the protein content. I must admit that the personal care home that exists in Transcona is a bit of an exception and they in fact have been able to deal with this quite well and maybe that's one of the reasons why some people might consider them as being one of the richer personal care homes. They are run by Seventh Day Adventists who always have had a low meat content to their meals. Their meals are very nutritious; the kitchen works wonderfully well; there are warm, home-cooked meals. Those people living in that personal care home are very fortunate.

I have gone to other personal care homes where the philosophy has been somewhat different. They have been used to high meat content to their meals and now they are complaining that the meat content has decreased or that it is the same. They get turkey four or five meals in a row, so the complaints go.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has one minute.

MR. PARASIUK: Thank you. I think, Mr. Chairperson, that the Minister really has to come to grips with the whole requirement of defining the needs of the elderly in specific terms and in aggregate terms and we have not had that given to us yet as a Legislature, Mr. Chairperson; then secondly, once he has told us what those needs are, he should then tell us what he can do this year to meet some of those needs and what his plans might be for subsequent years to meet some of that need. Not just come in and say, well, it's budget time, times are tough and we need restraint and therefore what we are going to do is have a 6 percent increase and 200 more personal care homes (sic). That's not enough, Mr. Chairperson.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (2)—pass — the Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I just want to clarify something. I asked the Minister if the revenue, which I think was \$1.5 million, from the people who have already been panelled, that remains with the hospitals. Now, is that over and above or is that deducted? Does that form part of the 287 for the hospitals, the next line? In other words, that's the payment towards that total amount, is it? I WONDER IF THE Minister understands what I am saying?

MR. SHERMAN: I understand what the honourable member is saying, that the 287 in front of the Committee is a net figure. That's what the hospitals receive net. In other words, the revenue they get from the per diem charge is levied on panelled patients, is separate and distinct from that.

MR. DESJARDINS: Is that over and above it?

MR. SHERMAN: That's right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (2)—pass — the Honourable Minister.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I wasn't sure whether that was all the Honourable Member for St. Boniface was going to raise at that moment.

I wanted to just acknowledge the remarks of the Honourable Member for Transcona and respond by advising him that certainly very diligent and conscientious attention is being devoted by my office, my department, the Health Services Commission and the Consultative Committee between the MMA and the Commission, to the very questions that he raises with respect to the bed requirements for the elderly in the different categories and levels of required care. He made reference to the need for an overview of the problems of the elderly. I would just remind him that the government has announced and is in the process of establishing, as an agency of government, a commission on aging, a commission on age and opportunity and the challenges and needs facing the elderly. My own staff and I myself have met personally on more than one occasion with the Manitoba Association of Senior Citizens to develop input from that group that can form part and parcel of the material that the Commission on Aging will address.

In addition to that, and the Member for Transcona did make reference to it, we have announced a new adult day care program that will be in place this year and will, I think, provide opportunities for 200 elderly persons to have the advantages of association with personal care homes in their communities and yet remain in their own homes in their own communities. We did, in our Capital Program for the Health Services Commission, announce plans to build 122 new personal care beds in the coming year. The total actually is 128 because the new St. Joseph's Personal Care Home is 100 beds and it replaces a 94-bed facility, so there is really a net gain of six beds there, but the 122 referred to in the Capital Program announced a few weeks ago, are divided among six different facilities spread throughout the province to meet perceived regional and community needs in various corners of the province.

I am of the same mind as the Honourable Member for Transcona when he talks about the desirability of initiatives in the area of enriched elderly persons' housing. As a matter of fact, the Consultative Committee operating between my office and the MMA, has developed strong recommendations on initiatives in the enriched elderly persons' housing field as the answer to the fundamental problems that we have in terms of care for the elderly and I am in discussion with my colleague, the Minister responsible for the MHRC, on that subject. I can tell him that there is a consensus in a broad part of the professional medical community and professional care community that we have a more urgent requirement for extended treatment beds than for personal care beds and this is a subject that is similarly receiving major attention by the government as we plan our steps carefully for this and future years.

The actual waiting list in the personal care field has declined and reference was made to this at an earlier point in the Estimates when we were discussing the Office of Continuing Care and the Home Care Program in particular. The waiting list for personal care in April of 1976 totalled 2,027; in April of 1977, it totalled 2,134; in April of 1978, it totalled 2,117; and as of January 30, 1979, and I think I provided this figure during that discussion on Home Care in the earlier Estimates examinations, it totalled 1,854, which breaks down into 929 Winnipeg and 925 outside of Winnipeg. As I said at that time, the difference is accounted for by expanded home care service to persons who wished to remain in their homes rather than going into personal care facilities, and also, I would suggest, there has to a certain extent been a levelling off — and I use that term carefully because I know that the population is aging, I'm aware of the statistical demographic changes

in our population and those that are projected to occur over the next 50 years — but nonetheless, Mr. Chairman, it is evident that as with a great many programs, there is a responsive rush at their outset that is not necessarily maintained always at the same peak. There is a tendency for those responses to level out into something of a more even flow. That has occurred in both the personal care field and in the home care field and our direct field reports and service reports bear that out.

Nonetheless, I don't deny that there is a need for more beds for the elderly in Manitoba, whether it is personal care beds or enriched elderly persons' housing or extended treatment, I'm not prepared to say at this juncture. There is an argument that can be made for all three categories and there is an argument that can be made for them individually as well as collectively. But that subject is being addressed very studiously by my department, by the Commission, and by that Consultative Committee.

The fact of the matter is that in terms of our guidelines established not by this administration — in terms of our guidelines, our ratio of nursing home beds per thousands of our citizens over age 65 and over age 70 compares very very favorably with any province, any jurisdiction in Canada and on a per capita basis, our Manitoba Home Care Program is well ahead of other provinces. So that I think that we have to be reasonable, sensible and realistic in our approach to the problem. It is desirable, of course, to expand as practicably as possible in these fields. It is not desirable to overextend ourselves and to engage in unrealistic expansions that threaten the program and the system that we have in place.

I would just commend those thoughts to the Honourable the Member for Transcona in response to the views which he has put to me, which I assure him will remain very very sincerely in consideration.

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

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I would like to double-check with the Minister. I think he told me that as of last year, the year that has just finished, that there were 600 people in the hospitals occupying acute beds that had been panelled, and presently, or this coming year, there will be 800. Am I correct in that? I see the figures of 600 and 800.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. SHERMAN: No, the other way around, Mr. Chairman. I think when we announced that the imposition of the per diem charge on panelled personal care patients in acute beds a year ago, we estimated that at that time on the basis of the best statistics available that there were 800 persons in Manitoba in that category and they broke down roughly into 400 rural and 400 urban. The figure today is 600 persons in that category and it breaks down into, I think it was 400 urban and 200 rural.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, that made more sense. This is why I wanted to double check because I would imagine that once this charge is on that the people will not be thinking of staying there as long and would like to maybe leave as soon as possible. It certainly acts as a deterrent, Mr. Chairman.

Now, Mr. Chairman, it seems to me that we're having exactly same situation here as we have in most of the other programs of this department. From 1977-78, there was an increase for personal care homes at 12 percent. The following year, 1978-79, there was 8 percent increase in the amount requested, and this last year approximately 7 percent, I haven't got the exact figure. And Mr. Chairman, we've had over the period of time, we've had some criticisms, some letters and some statements were made that they were cutting down on the food and cutting down on staff and the minister has always denied that. And I can't see how he can do that, how he can deny it. Anybody, it doesn't matter if you want to if you want to misrepresent or it doesn't matter if you don't want to admit it, it stands to reason that if you're going to cut down the increase where the food keeps going up, where the increase in the salaries and so on keeps going up in this period of inflation, that if you don't meet this increase, that something's going to suffer. You have the same thing, you're dealing in the non-proprietary and the proprietary personal care homes. It only stands to reason that if I'm running a business, I want to make money. And if I have a proprietary nursing home, that if the payment that I get is not sufficient to meet the legitimate increases, that I'm going to cut down somewhere because I want my profit. I'm not in business to lose money, and that stands to reason that this is what's happening.

Now, you know, we've had that over a period of years, that we were laughed at if somebody from this side of the House will mention that they're cutting down on the food, or they're cutting

down on staff, or cutting down in the services, and that's absolutely true, Mr. Chairman. I suggest again that this is a program that, if this Conservative government had not found this in place that we would not have such a program. Now, mind you, in opposition of course, during the campaign it was said that they would build many more beds. Now, in all fairness there are some beds that are going this year and that was just an extra cost and you had less time to pay for the maintenance, but it'll cost you more money to build them, and in fact, the way you're going now, the more beds you have, the more money you save, the less money you put in.

In 1978-79, you increased this budget by \$4.8 million or close to \$4.9 million, and this year you're increasing it by \$4.6 million and you've got more beds. You've got more beds, quite a few more beds than you had the previous year and that to me, Mr. Chairman, that is certainly not reasonable. It doesn't make sense, something has to suffer. Either you were right and we were throwing money at these people, they had way too much money, they were too rich on staff and so on, and now it's just right. Now, it's possibility, and I'm ready to give the benefit of the doubt to my honourable friend, it might be that some ideas in some areas we might have been a little liberal, certainly not throwing money, I remember when I was at the Commission, and later on when I was the minister, I remember how many appeals these people had and they needed more money, but let's say that we could, maybe we were a little liberal then, maybe that's why the minister is saying that this program is so much advanced compared to the other provinces, and I believe that. And the minister said that of many programs lately, these last few days, and stood up and said "This is the best program." He said that about Day Care and we see in the paper today again that Day Care the way they were going to go, they're going to squeeze it, this is what we said, this is what the people are saying now. The Pharmacare was the same thing. The Dental Care and we had a lot of time to discuss those I'm just giving examples, and now we're faced with a situation that the percentage increase is going down, the cost is going up certainly much more than the increase that is allowed, and you have more beds.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I know that we can't argue about the next statement that I'll make because the minister will keep on saying that what he's saying is factual and I'm questioning that. The minister is saying that it has plateaued, that there's less of a demand, I don't believe that a bit, Mr. Chairman, I don't believe that at all. What I believe, though, is because of the lack of staff, and we will discuss that if the people in the field, the people that are making these assessments, that there's less people panelled, and I think that even without having something written, I know from what I'm told that they're tougher now when they make the evaluation, and I know of many, many people, and I've given a case just a few days ago to my honourable friend, but as far as I'm concerned, certainly these people should be in a personal care home, and it's very hard to find these places, I'm not saying it was easy before, but it's worse. It certainly hasn't plateaued at all, Mr. Chairman and then there's less in the home care also.

Home Care is another program that was the envy of all the provinces in Canada and maybe of the North American continent, and that is going, I'm not saying it's going down the drain, that would be exaggerating, but it's not what it was and we haven't got the same staff, and it's tougher to get the home care to remain on home care, Mr. Chairman.

The main point that I want to make at this time, before we talk about construction and so on, is that this government said there's going to be more beds. They froze everything when they came in, they froze everything that they could. There's certain things that were too far advanced and mind you, there was a lot of things that were advanced and there's a lot of programs that continue that we don't see here. The minister announced 13 programs, but there's many more than 13 programs since we announced there were quite a few that were started when we announced that after all, I think it was in 1975 or maybe '76, I think it was sometime in 1975 that we announced the 5 Year Program and some got along. For instance, the Tache Hospital, and the one in St. Vital, and Seven Oaks. Well, Seven Oaks, I think is a combination of both. They've some personal care beds or rehab beds and so on.

So there's quite a few in all fairness and that might help the minister when I say that, because I think the people felt that everything was frozen, that nothing moved. Some of them were allowed to finish and it provided more beds and the situation is not quite as bad. I thank God that we had beds. And the minister is talking about lifting the freeze on other programs, and it might be that by the end of the 5 years he won't be that far behind, Mr. Chairman. But this program, as I say I cannot understand, that when you have more beds and you put in less of an increase than the year before, when the cost is going up and up and up, Mr. Chairman. So I don't know if the minister has any explanation for that, but it seems again that this is the same situation of a program that we're going to squeeze and squeeze and squeeze. The minister gets up and tells us how wonderful the program it is, how it's the best, but then it's not going to be the best the way we're going now.

Mr. Chairman, this is, this again I repeat, this government, and I'm not blaming just the minister,

I'm talking about the Party, during the campaign said that there was very poor management and that just with the money saved on better management, just on that money alone, that they could save to increase to improve the program. Well, maybe they were sincere. Maybe they believe that, but they found out after a year and a half or so that that's not the case and it seems to me that they should either revise their stand, in all fairness, revise their stand and say, well you know, we were dreaming, it's not that much, maybe we did indeed find some mismanagement, but certainly it wasn't that much and there is no way that we'd keep on with this, we either have to cut down on the increase, we won't keep up with inflation which is the case in all programs, and we will cut the services which is certainly the case in all programs.

And I don't think the minister should, time after time, day after day, get up and deny that there's any lessening, that the service is as good as it was and they have the same staff and so on, because that's not the case, Mr. Chairman. And, you know, for a year or so, they might have something going for them. There's a fear in this staff of losing their job when they see the wholesale firing and reduction and restraint all over the place, that the people for a while will do quite a bit more than their share but eventually, especially these people that are united, will stand up and say, well, there's a limit, we're not going to have all the load to carry by ourselves, we can do so much, but not more, and I think that this is what's going to happen. The morale hasn't been good at all, but there's been that fear holding the people together and, eventually, that fear will disappear, it might be despair in some cases, and the people will stand up and the government will be faced, I don't wish that on any government, but the government will be faced with difficult situation when the nurses come back to negotiate their contracts, and the other people in personal care homes, and of course, in the hospital.

So, Mr. Chairman, I don't think that we're very pleased with the progress. There's no progress, this is as I say, you don't stand still, you either go forward or go backwards, and we're going backwards. We're going backwards. The service is not the same in these homes than they have been, and that stands to reason and they shouldn't be any argument at all.

Now if the minister can tell me, or if the government can tell me it was too rich, we can't afford it, the people of Manitoba can't afford that, so we're reducing the services, that I will not accept that this is the way I believe, but I'll accept that this is fair. You know, they are saying this is too rich, the people of Manitoba . . . they've said that in certain instances, and they might say this is too rich, we cannot afford that, so we will cut the service. But they repeatedly say that things are just the same, just as good if not better and that's what gets me, Mr. Chairman because that is not the case, it cannot be the case, it cannot be the case at all, Mr. Chairman. I think that in some areas, I talked about 7 percent, I don't know where that goes, but I've seen letters where some personal care homes, if not I haven't seen them all, but I've seen some, I think some from our side had a copy of these letters, where they were told that they're going to have to make do with I think 3 percent or 3 point something percent increase.

Now, we could probably dig up this letter, I don't know if the minister was shaking his head, if he denies that or if he's just discussing something with his staff, but I saw the letter, a copy of the letter, that said that a personal care home will have to make do with an increase of 3 or in all fairness it might be 3 point something, but it's not 4 percent, Mr. Chairman, and before this Debate is over, I hope that we can find that letter or that somebody will quote it because I think there's other people that want to speak on this. So, Mr. Chairman, and I think that the Minister knows also and in fact he mentioned that, that the population is getting older all the time and by the turn of the century, we'll have a lot of people, a much bigger percentage — I had that, I haven't got it in front of me — but the percentage is quite high of people who are over 65 years old and I think we all know that there is a larger percentage of those people needing personal care homes and home care and hospital care than the others.

So, Mr. Chairman, this is a concern that we have. I certainly don't intend to talk the clock out. If the Minister wants to reply to either the Member for Transcona or myself, fine, and we'll go to something else after this.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, the staff reduction in the Personal Care Home field for 1978-79 was 2.1 percent, a reduction in EFTs from 3,594 to 3,517, which is a net reduction of 77 positions or 2.1 percent. That, I suggest, is hardly a massive or a destructive kind of reduction. I can only say to the Honourable Member for St. Boniface that I firmly believe that my case is as good as his is. He insists that services in the personal care home field are declining; I insist that they are not. He says, and I think this is a direct quote from his remarks, "The service is not the same in these institutions. It stands to reason." Well, I say it doesn't stand to reason, unless he can prove it to me and demonstrate it to me. You know, you get the occasional, anonymous complaint.

A MEMBER: It's not anonymous.

MR. SHERMAN: Well, you do get the occasional anonymous complaint and we have all seen them in the newspapers, but it is very hard to check out anonymous complaints unless we know what home is being spoken about, and I'm sure the honourable member had the same problem when he was Minister. But we do maintain a rigorous procedure of monitoring of standards through our Standards Division and one of the things that I'm most concerned about and I tell my honourable friend this in all sincerity, is the dietary standard, the level of diets, meals and nutrition. I have caused to be investigated, not as an official investigation, but I have caused to be re-examined more rigorously than perhaps before, the whole standard and level of diets and meals in the personal care home field. —(Interjection)— Yes, it is, but you see, the Member for St. Boniface talks about a 3 percent increase and I don't know where he got that from. He never got it from me and he never got it from this department and he never got it from the Health Services Commission. We have talked about a general average increase of 6 percent and we were very clear to say that that was a general average increase. —(Interjection)— Yes, in the personal care field.

MR. DESJARDINS: . . . more than 6 percent.

MR. SHERMAN: Well, Mr. Chairman, that well may be, but the fact of the matter is that there is no deterioration on the basis of the information that I have asked for and sought and been given by my officials in the Health Services Commission and one has to rely, and I think my honourable friend would concur in this, on the integrity of the job that the Health Services Commission does for the province and the people of Manitoba. There is no evidence of any deterioration in quality of food or in nutrition standards. I daresay there are individual days when there are individual complaints. My mother, who was cared for by my sister for a long long time, ultimately ended her days in a personal care home and had the best of tender, loving care if one may resort to that cliché. But there were days when she complained about various things and occasionally about a meal that she had had, or amenities of that kind. And that will always happen and I'm sure it happened to my honourable friend. But in general, Mr. Chairman, I must stand on the monitoring that we have carried out and on the reports that have come back to me and I feel confident that I can say that those standards have not declined. There has been a slight reduction in staffing but I'm sure the honourable member carried that sort of thing out in his own business lots of times. All that is is tighter management.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Seven Oaks.

MR. SAUL MILLER: Mr. Chairman, I have listened to the Minister's explanation and the fact of the matter is, and this is not debatable really, is that we know the cost of living, inflation, has accounted for an increase in the cost of food of 21 percent. Those are facts and in personal care homes, people have to be fed. So anyone who goes shopping at all, as I did this morning in a shopping centre, I was shocked frankly. My wife thought I maybe should be exposed to what is happening with food prices and this morning I got a bit of an education. The personal care homes are certainly faced with these increases and as a result they have no choice, they have got to cut corners. They have got to cut corners wherever they can and since food is a major item, I don't doubt that they have had to cut down on that.

Now, the Minister may claim that nonetheless it is not injurious to people's health and they are still being fed, and that may be so. But to say that the standards haven't slipped, I can't accept. Certainly the quality has to be affected.

As well, in the staffing, there is just less staff. Just as the Minister said, in his own department there was a 2.1 percent drop in staff, similarly that same drop in staff probably had to take place in personal care homes. So there are less people on the floors . . .

MR. SHERMAN: That figure was for Personal Care Homes. It wasn't my department.

No, 2.1 in the Personal Care Homes. So that is a thinning out. It means that where there were two people looking after a number of rooms, there is just one now and if they get tied up with one patient, they can't attend to the other. It is these little things, nonetheless they are very real.

Mr. Chairman, one thing I noted about these Estimates is that in the two-year period March 31, 1978 to projected March 31, 1980, we see the provincial government increasing its funding to personal care homes by 16 percent over the 24-month period. It is interesting that what they have done with regard to the per diem that the individual has to pay, that has gone up 24 percent.

Isn't that interesting? This government, which in another program said, we had to raise the deductible on Pharmacare because there hadn't been an increase and we felt that the individual wasn't picking up enough of his share, so therefore we raised the individual deductible by 50 percent to the person. It's a direct tax on people. Here we see an increase over that same period, really it is within 12 months, an increase of 24 percent in the per diem, which is charged to the individual, and in that same period, the government increase not matching it, not being greater, certainly not, not even matching it. Now it is only 16 percent.

So what we are seeing all the way through here, and what we have seen all the way through this Minister's Estimates is what we have maintained from the very beginning and what people outside are now starting to realize, that there is a squeezing out, a gradual strangulation of programs, so that whereas at one time, that Minister could get up when he first took over the portfolio and said there is no question that the health and social services levels in Manitoba is tops in Canada. Well, he can no longer say that because what he is doing is strangling those programs. Now, he can say that it is just as good as in many other jurisdictions, it is no worse than in many other jurisdictions, he can use all those phrases. But he cannot and will not be able to say Manitoba leads the way, and why shouldn't they lead the way? Why shouldn't they lead the way in a service to people which is so absolutely essential. My colleague for Transcona pointed out something I know the Minister knows, that as people are living longer, we have got to provide for them. We have got to put them into facilities which are not just institutions so that they become institutionalized like zombies, but as close to a family atmosphere as one can achieve.

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

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

MR. SPEAKER: We are now under Private Members' Hour. The first item of business is Public Bills, Bill No. 29. The Honourable Member for Inkster.

SECOND READING — PUBLIC BILLS

BILL NO. 29 — AN ACT TO AMEND THE CLEAN ENVIRONMENT ACT

MR. GREEN presented Bill No. 29, An Act to amend The Clean Environment Act, for second reading.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I regret the fact that the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources is not in the House because, really, I was bringing this bill forward as a — I will say it with some trepidation — legislative assistant to him. During the Estimates of Supply in connection with the Department of Mines, it was brought to his attention, Mr. Speaker, that there is a situation in a community in Manitoba where a man had a business which was situated very close to a place where a municipality was putting a drainage ditch. It wasn't a drainage ditch; it was with regard to sewage effluent, in other words, a ditch which would cause an odour and one which the health department said should not be situated close to that man's land. The municipality went to the Clean Environment Commission and requested that they have the right to proceed with this program and at the Clean Environment Commission, the city, or the municipality, advised the Commission that they would apply for an abatement program which would enable the municipality to move the citizen's home and business to another location with the province and the municipality picking up 50 percent each of the costs. That was a program, Mr. Speaker, which I believe was adopted unanimously by all of the members of this House in order to facilitate this problem where it had occurred in other places, notably in the City of Winnipeg with regard to a place like Prairie Foundry, but more directly to the situation which occurred in Springfield where an urban community had grown up in the neighbourhood of a hog ranch, ranch. Both users of the property were lawfully using it but they were obviously incompatible with nobody really to blame. So we introduced legislation which enabled a municipality, under those circumstances, to remedy the situation of incompatible although lawful users, by moving the nuisance type of industry to a different place and picking up the costs 50-50 with the Province of Manitoba.

Well, that situation did occur in the area that I'm talking about and after the municipality had got permission by the Clean Environment Commission to proceed, they changed their mind and after the municipality had got permission by the Clean Environment Commission to proceed they changed their mind about the Abatement Program. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, when I was the Minister I then said that there should be a re-hearing because the Commission's Order was based, in my opinion, partly on the fact that the municipality had agreed to move the man and that they had reneged on that and therefore there should be a new hearing. Well at this stage, Mr. Speaker, my own involvement ended and I believe that the Commission has advised the Minister of Mines that regardless of whether that promise had been made or not, they probably or indeed I think they said that they would have permitted the municipality to have that use. That being the case the municipality proceeded ahead, Mr. Speaker, but the man with the business could not maintain his operation beside that particular facility. It was definitely a nuisance facility. He had a tremendous argument with the municipality and I am not going to say who is right and who is wrong. He finally on his own apparently picked up his business and moved it at considerable expense and was unable to get the municipality to apply for an abatement finding, that there is an incompatible use of property in order to proceed with an abatement program.

Mr. Speaker, I did not criticize the government in this respect. I indicated that we had all assumed that a municipality with that type of problem would attempt to be fair with the citizen and that there would be 50 percent provincial sharing and that the man would be moved. One thing that we did not expect is that the municipality would refuse to apply for this type of change and the municipality has now built their nuisance facility and will take no action whatsoever to determine whether there should be an abatement program which they could apply for to move this man ostensibly on the grounds, well who cares, let him sit there, we're not going to pay for moving him because we don't wish to and the fact that we have created this facility next to him is something that we are not concerned with and as far as the municipality is concerned they say I'm all right, Jack.

And I think, Mr. Speaker, that this is very unfair, and I raised it on the Minister's estimates. His reply — and I am paraphrasing, I am not trying to use his exact words — is that there is a flaw in the Legislation that he cannot deal with it at this session. Now, Mr. Speaker, I am here to help the Minister of Mines. He says there was a flaw in the Legislation. He says that he couldn't deal with it this session. I want to show him how fast it could be dealt with and he doesn't even have to do the work, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Speaker. I am prepared to cross party lines and be his Legislative assistant with regard —(Interjection)— Yes, I mean you know that I am always bending over backwards to be of assistance to my honourable friends.

Mr. Speaker, I can only go so far. I've prepared an Act which says simply, simply, simply, Mr. Speaker, I've said simply that the Minister could ask for an abatement order from the Clean Environment Commission, excuse me, it doesn't have to be the municipality. If the municipality doesn't do it and a citizen wants it, that the citizen can go to the Minister and the Minister could say that there should be an abatement program, in which case it would be referred to the Clean Environment Commission. The Clean Environment Commission would say whether in fact there is an incompatibility between the two uses and if there is, and at this point, Mr. Speaker, I've gone as far as I can and it would have to be the Minister who uses self-help to improve upon it, because all I am able to do is to say that the Minister can ask for a finding from the Clean Environment Commission.

In order to get the Government to be able to say that there shall be a program and that it will be shared 50-50 between the province and the municipality I require a message from the Lieutenant-Governor, and things being what they are I am not likely to get such a message. So I can only be of partial assistance to the Minister but I want to be as helpful as I can. He said during the estimates that he cannot do this, it's too late in the session, he cannot do it this session, there is a flaw in the Legislation and knowing that he is very hard worked, knowing that it's difficult for him to get things done, I am helping him. Here is the Legislation. It's only one page but I know that for some people some things are more difficult than others and the fact is that here is the Legislation. The Minister can add to it if he chooses to get a message from the Lieutenant-Governor.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that the Minister will recognize my efforts on his behalf and pay me proper respect for having done it but I am even willing to sacrifice that I am willing to be the long suffering parliamentarian who gets no credit and is not thanked by the Minister but brings in the Legislation in any event. And therefore, Mr. Speaker, I offer Bill No. 29 as a gift to my friend and colleague the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources, who said that he couldn't do it this session. I say that he has a problem. I want to help him with his problem. This will be of assistance. I do not believe that the municipality should be able to get away with this type of thing without even a finding as to whether they have created a nuisance activity. I believe the Minister agrees with me because

he said there was a flaw in the Legislation and he can even blame the flaw on me if he wishes to. I didn't think that a municipality in Manitoba would behave that way. Now that we know that they will behave that way this is not doing anything arbitrary. It merely says the Minister can refer the matter to the Clean Environment Commission to see whether they can find that there's an incompatible use. At that stage if we can't get agreement between the municipality and the Government as to dealing with the cause, nothing further will happen unless of course the Minister gets the message which I am unable to get and says that where there is such a finding the cost of movement of relieving this incompatible situation will be shared by the municipality and the Government of the Province of Manitoba.

So, Mr. Chairman, with best wishes and many happy returns I offer this bill to the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources.

MR. ARNOLD BROWN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the member for St. Matthews, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: We now move on to Resolutions, the proposed motion of the honourable member for LOGAN.

RESOLUTION NO. 5 — MINIMUM WAGE INCREASE

MR. SPEAKER: The amendment of the honourable member for Kildonan, the honourable member for St. Matthews has 12 minutes.

MR. DOMINO: The members opposite listened rather intently the last time I spoke on this matter and they were very excited, as I believe they were up and down thumping on their desks and encouraging me, encouraging all of us to cut things short so that we could end the debate, and we could vote on this. I think we probably will get a chance to vote on this today. Mr. Speaker, I'm in a bit of a quandry when it comes to this particular resolution but I have thought about it a lot and I have come to the conclusion that we've got to face that in everything we do in this world we have to take some good with some of the bad, and this resolution presents to me a situation where we have a lot of bad with some good and I am willing to accept the amendment to this resolution to get the good part of it now, immediately.

Mr. Speaker, the first part of this resolution calls for in effect a 75 cent raise in the minimum wage. That's wrong, Mr. Speaker, the first part of this resolution says that the minimum wage should be set automatically at 60 percent of the average industrial wage, that's wrong, Mr. Speaker. Those two, if we were to implement that sort of action what would happen would be that we would put people out of work. It would make it harder for the low income and the young people to find jobs and we would create more unemployment in just the groups of people that we second part of this resolution, Mr. Speaker, calls want to help.

The for a 25-cent immediate increase in minimum wage. That's good. That I can accept and that I think we should go ahead with immediately. That's only a 12 percent increase. 12 percent over two years is about what most of us in this society have been getting. It just allows the minimum wage earners to keep up with us. It doesn't alter their situation in terms of the rest of society. It doesn't bump them from 50 percent of the average industrial wage to 60 percent. Cause when you make that jump of 10 percent, what you do according to the Brooking Institute which I quoted earlier and the Economic Institute of Ontario — and what all common sense and what all research has told us is when you jack up the minimum wage beyond 50 percent of the average industrial wage, what happens is you begin to put people out of work. You begin to encourage and reach the point where employers and manufacturers are encouraged to replace low cost unskilled work with capital investment and with machines.

So, Mr. Speaker, I don't have any problem with it at all when I think about it for a while, that what we should do is raise the minimum wage by 25 cents now, and what we should not do is to set the minimum wage rate at 60 percent of the average industrial wage. 25 cents now allows the minimum wage earner to keep up with the rest of us. 60 percent or 75 cent increase immediately will put them out of work which will put them behind and make it harder for them. As I said earlier the real solution to the minimum wage, the real solution to having low income people who have a hard time surviving in our society is not by fiddling with the minimum wage. It's not by insisting employers pay a person more than they can get in return for their labour. What we have to do to help the low income earners is supply more direct Government assistance, more rent subsidies, maybe even more public housing is necessary, more education, more training. All those programs

work a lot better than when you start to fool around with the minimum wage. They don't put people out of work. They don't force Salisbury Houses to convert from regular type Salisbury Houses to self-serve. They don't force gas station owners to do away with the gas jockeys, replace them with self-serve.

Mr. Speaker, I think I'd like to also make the point here that I don't quarrel with the motives from the member from Logan. I accept that the member Mr Logan, his motives are good. I think that when he proposed the original part of this resolution, the 60 e percent, I think his motives were honest and sincere. He actually is of the opinion that this will help the working poor. He's wrong but I accepted his motives are proper but as I have said many times in this House you do not base your decision upon what the motives are of the individual suggesting a resolution. You base your decision upon what the actual effect will be and if we raise the minimum wage 75 cents today we will put people out of work. If we raise it 25 cents today we will allow them some little measure of extra compensation and they will probably be able to keep their jobs too.

So, Mr. Speaker, I plan to support the amendment that's suggested to the resolution and I hope that after I am finished speaking we will be able to vote on it, that it won't be dragged out much further. I plan to support the amendment at this time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The question is on the proposed amendment. Moved by the Honourable Member for Kildonan: And be it further resolved that pending the outcome of such consideration there be an immediate increase of 25 cents per hour in the minimum wage.

QUESTION put, MOTION lost.

MR. JENKINS: Yeas and Nays, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Call in the members.

Order please. The question before the House is the proposed amendment moved by the Honourable Member for Kildonan: And be it further resolved that pending the outcome of such consideration there be an immediate increase of 25 cents per hour in the minimum wage.

A STANDING VOTE was taken, the result being as follows:

YEAS: Messrs. Adam, Boyce, Cherniack, Corrin, Cowan, Desjardins, Doern, Domino, Evans, Fox, Green, Hanuschak, Jenkins, Malinowski, Miller, Parasiuk, Pawley, Uruski, Uskiw, Walding.

NAYS: Messrs. Anderson, Banman, Blake, Brown, Cosens, Craik, Downey, Driedger, Enns, Ferguson, Galbraith, Hyde, Johnston, Jorgenson, Kovnats, Lyon, McGill, McGregor, McKenzie, Mercier, Minaker, Orchard, Mrs. Price, Messrs. Ransom, Sherman, Steen, Wilson.

MR. CLERK: Yeas 20, Nays 27.

MR. SPEAKER: I declare the amendment lost.

We're now dealing with the proposed amendment of the Honourable Member for Logan. The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was sitting as we were just taking the vote a moment ago, and I was saying to myself because I remembered one of the times in the mini Session when I had stood up on this side fairly alone, thinking back to my comments at that time, and I was watching the face of the Member for St. Matthews and I said to myself, "He must be a bit embarrassed right now because he has to stand up alone out of the 28 members who are in the House today for this vote", and if it's any consolation to the Member for St. Matthews, I don't think he should be the embarrassed one. I think the other 27 should be the ones that were embarrassed today, because they were the ones, Mr. Speaker, that just denied the working poor of this province a quarter, two bits Mr. Speaker. They were the ones who stood up in their seats and said, "No."

Now, what are the working people of this province, the working poor of this province, supposed to think? What sort of impression does that government have with those people when they stand up in this House and say, "You are not worth two bits after 30 some odd months." What sort of impression does that leave in the minds of the 30 to 40,000 working poor, low wage, minimum

wage earners, in this province?

In a moment, Mr. Speaker, for those of you who are looking at the paraphernalia that's just been brought in from the outside, I intend to bring the level of this debate down to the supermarket. I intend to give my brown bag speech, my grocery store speech, because I think where this battle is being fought — the battle for an increase in the minimum wage is not being fought in this House, it's being fought out there by the 30 to 40,000 who have to go to the grocery store every week.

But before I do that, Mr. Speaker, I want to answer the challenge that the Member for St. Matthews threw at us in his debate this year and his debate last year because debates were pretty much the same. If there are two things that have remained constant over that period of time it is the minimum wage and the Member for St. Matthews' speech, because if you have an opportunity to peruse Hansard, on both occasions you will see he said pretty much the same things in pretty much the same manner.

He quoted the same statistics, and he quoted a study, and he asked us, "Have we taken any time to study the problem? Have we taken any time to look into the effect that an increase in the minimum wage will have on the employment levels in the province, on the inflation levels in the province, and the prices, and what sort of ripple effect it will have?" Well, yes we have, Mr. Speaker, and just as he can throw one study across the floor, we can throw a study back, and we can get up with this paper fight where we toss the studies back and forth and they will support whatever the person who is doing the tossing is saying because the studies are all things to all people.

He can quote me a study, or quote this side a study, that says the increase in the minimum wage is going to increase the employment. I can quote him a study done by the Federal Government that says no noticeable impact on employers' employment decisions were brought about by an increase in the minimum wage. In other words, there might have been a minor impact, but no noticeable impact on how the employer was going to deploy his or her labour force came about as a result of an increase in the minimum wage. A study in New Brunswick showed that 5.5 percent of low wage employers had dismissed employees after a minimum wage increase had taken place, but it was a relatively few number. Now, it was not a relatively few number to those individuals who were caught up in that, Mr. Speaker, but I would suggest that the regressive policies of this government have caused the employers in this province to lay off far more than 5.5 percent, and if they're truly worried about the unemployment, if they're truly worried about those people, then they should do some stimulative programs instead of holding back the minimum wage.

There was a study done in Ontario where it said, "The employment declines observed in this study cannot be attributed solely, or even largely, to the minimum wage revision," another study that shows that the minimum wage does not have a tremendous impact on the employment of the province.

There was a study done in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, in 1972-73, a fairly thick study, if the Member for St. Matthews had had the opportunity to peruse it and to study it, and the study concluded that the minimum wage increase had a negligible impact both in terms of numbers employed and the pattern of hours worked.

There was a study done in Ontario, Mr. Speaker, that said very little impact on employment was detected within the retail trade, laundry, and hotel and restaurant industries, although a few firms suggested they would have hired more workers had the rate not been increased.

There was a study done in British Columbia that indicated that only 5.2 of the responding firms laid off employees as a direct result of the minimum wage. The 364 employees who were dismissed represented altogether less than 1 percent of the total survey done. Now, 384 employees laid off because of an increase in the minimum wage in British Columbia, and this is a government that brags about laying off 1500 Civil Servants, or 1800, whatever the latest figure is.

So Mr. Speaker, the government on the one hand comes and says, "We cannot give the people, the working poor of the Province of Manitoba, a quarter increase in the minimum wage because it will create unemployment, and quote all sorts of studies, and throw all sorts of statistics over here which we can counter and throw back, yet their policies in government have created some of the worst unemployment that this province has seen for one hell of a time.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to right now do my own study, because as I said previously, I don't think that the battle for the minimum wage is being fought in this House. I think the battle for the minimum wage is being fought by those low wage earners, and statistics show us that approximately one-quarter of the working poor are sole supporters of families, so we're not talking about secondary income earners, we're not talking about people who have part-time jobs, we're talking about 10,000 people who have to support themselves, and their families in many instances, on the minimum wage. And let's see what the impact of the last 30 months have had on those people, Mr. Speaker.

The increase in food since September, 1976 Mr. Speaker, has been approx

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. May I suggest to the honourable member that it's highly improper to bring anything other than a cup of water into the Chamber. It is not within the interests of the community to bring food into the Chamber.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. In the years that I've been here I've seen it done more than once. I've also seen a backbencher on the government side of the Roblin Government mix margarine right here with a hat and an apron on, so Mr. Speaker, it might not happen too often but it hasn't ever been ruled out of order.

MR. SPEAKER: I've brought it to the attention of the members that those are some of the rules, and it is my duty to enforce the rules unless the House, by its own consent, can change those rules.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I dispute your suggestion as to what the rule is. I suggest that the rule that relates to bringing things into the Chamber for one's own comfort or nourishment, and even that we've maintained a bit of a blind eye. I mean I will have to confess I hope I will not be named that I have brought chocolate bars into the Chamber and eaten them, but the honourable member is bringing into the House a demonstration. He is not bringing anything for his comfort. He's bringing a speaking aid, and I want to remind the honourable member that I brought him an apple he sent into the House to use it as a speaking aid and the Member for St. Boniface said that next week it would be snakes and ladders, and I suggest that the demonstration that the honourable member is making is in the best of parliamentary tradition.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. JORGENSON: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if you could give us the Citation that you draw the House's attention to. I would be interested in being able to see it. I have been looking for it, but I am unable to find it.

MR. SPEAKER: Pardon me, I apologize to the House. I was referring to Section 245 of Beuchesne, which says, "The consumption of any other food, other than water . . . ". It's the consumption. As long as the member doesn't eat it, it's quite all . . . fine.

The Honourable Member for Churchill may proceed. The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. ADAM: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I just want to point out that last year or the year before we were handed a five pound bag each of flour, and we were very happy to receive it. We did not consume it, but it was tabled and we were very pleased to receive it.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill may proceed.

MR. COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, they say forewarned is forearmed and I have to admit I had a chocolate bar in there that I have been eyeing, but I will wait until after the presentation is over.

I hope that that time is not deducted from my time, the time on the point of order, because I feel I am going to have to use the full 20 minutes.

The reason I brought the groceries into the House, Mr. Speaker, is because I, for the life of me, can't understand why they aren't increasing the minimum wage. I mean I don't think that they're that mean a government; I think they're mean but I don't think that they're that mean a government, and I don't think that they're that blind to what's happening out there. They buy food in the supermarket. They know that since September, 1976, food prices have increased by nearly one-third, they know that. I brought this food into the House because, when reading through the remarks that were made last year on the minimum wage — and these were made, mind you, in the Estimates by the Minister of Agriculture, when he said — "So, I think probably the main point that I want to put on the record is that as far as using the cost of food for the labour people, that it cannot be used as a legitimate reason for an increase in the minimum wage because the statistics show that there has been a decrease in the percentage of their dollar going towards food."

I didn't quite understand that, Mr. Speaker. I didn't understand what the Minister was driving at, because the low wage earner, the minimum wage earner, who goes into the grocery store now, is going in with a dollar that is less, foodwise, a food dollar that is less by a third than it was

in 1976, September.

So I thought to myself, how much less is that. I mean, we can throw the statistics back and forth; we can throw the studies back and forth but really how much less is that third. So I did a bit of a study, and I had to enlist the aid of some of my colleagues, and they told me, Mr. Speaker, that if you had bought four items in a grocery store on September 1st, 1976 — and this here is nice Co-op chicken noodle soup — had a person bought that in 1976 with their dollar and the increase in food prices means that that person, when they walk into the store today, can only buy three. And with the acceptance of this by the Member for Transcona, I will proceed. So now that's what they're out. That's what they're out, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, had a person gone in and bought themselves — it's a very nutritional food we're talking about; it's food that's necessary for the health and well-being of the people of this province — say it was one of those 10,000 minimum wage earners who was a sole support of a family, and say was one of that number who had four people in their family, and they had enough to buy enough milk for four of them in 1976, September. They don't any more, Mr. Speaker, because that's over there. That's out of their pocket, because there has been no increase in the minimum wage.

Mr. Speaker, had they been, as I am, a fan of some delicacies every once in awhile — and they are expensive — and had they decided to buy some oranges, Mr. Speaker, they would have been able to buy four oranges at that time, Mr. Speaker, four oranges at time, three now. So one of the kids or one of the parents — I don't care how they divvy it up — is without their orange and their milk and their chicken soup now, Mr. Speaker.

This was a chocolate bar, and I have to admit I was going to eat a quarter of it, but I will have it later. But let us assume for later that this chocolate bar now, which was dessert after the apples and oranges, is over here and this part goes to the Member for Transcona.

Mr. Speaker, had they had a loaf of bread — and I haven't had the opportunity to count out the slices in here, so I'm going to guesstimate — had they had a loaf of bread that's how much they would have left right now. I want you to look at that, because that's what you're doing to them. That's how you're treating the low wage earners in this province.

Some nice apples, Mr. Speaker. Had they had the apples — And I'm going to go through the whole shopping bag, and it didn't cost me all that much so it won't be all that long — one is over on this side and one is over here. Or three are over here, Mr. Speaker.

The carrots, I sort of hate to break these open because I'm going to have to eat them later, but let's take a quarter of those carrots and put the quarter over here. I am making an awful nice lunch for the Member for Transcona here, and if anybody wants to join me, and here's one for the Member for Logan, if anybody wants to join me later in the Caucus Room we will have a snack.

Mr. Speaker, cereal in the morning, cereal or eggs. One is over on this side now, Mr. Speaker, because there has been no increase in the minimum wage. So one of those people in that four-person family is going without the cereal. Or, Mr. Speaker, if they had decided to have eggs — you can tell that I'm out of practise as a packer; I used to pack groceries but I packed the eggs at the bottom, which is a cardinal sin. If they had eggs, Mr. Speaker —(Interjection)— I am tempted, Mr. Speaker, I am tempted but in the fine parliamentary tradition I will not. Three eggs; please don't drop those. One may hatch. Mr. Speaker, that's what they have left. That's what they have left.

Potatoes, and believe me this is probably the most appropriate food because a lot more minimum wage earners today are eating potatoes than were eating potatoes awhile ago, and had they had eight, two potatoes each, they have got six left, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, a package of baloney, and I'm going to have trouble breaking that open but let us just say that a quarter of it is on that side.

Wieners, \$1.48 at the Co-op. You know, when the minimum wage earner goes in there and says, that is half of my hour's work — that is a half hour's work for a minimum wage earner. They must be appalled because when they went in there in September of 1976 there was only about, oh, maybe a third of an hour instead of a half an hour. So they're working longer for those hot dogs now, Mr. Speaker.

Cheese, Mr. Speaker. I will put this over here just to show the difference. Again, they are going to have a quarter fewer slices in their cheese.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member has five minutes.

MR. COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Lettuce; that was an arm and a leg, Mr. Speaker, to get but I decided that I would have a sandwich afterwards and I wanted some lettuce, but I will tell you the minimum wage earners aren't buying

lettuce any more. They are not the ones that are buying the lettuce any more because it's just too far out of sight for them, and this government has refused to increase the minimum wage for those people.

Mr. Speaker, sugar, again a quarter is on that side. Mr. Speaker, every time I delve into the depths of my bag I come up with this. I am a bit concerned. But it is a necessity, Mr. Speaker, and the price has jumped. Because, believe it or not, the minimum wage earners have responsibilities as the rest of us do, —(Interjection)— ones over on this side.

Mr. Speaker, hamburger at \$1.49 a pound, and that was about 89 cents a pound, maybe less, maybe 79 cents a pound. Half over here and half over there, Mr. Speaker.

Now, let's put our bags back together here, Mr. Speaker, and I'm not going to put the eggs in the bottom like I did before. Because this is what the minimum wage earner is taking home now: three rolls of toilet paper; three cartons of milk; three boxes of cereal; three-quarters of the carrots that they were eating before; half of the meat; half of the hot dogs that have doubled in price; half of the baloney, Mr. Speaker; three apples instead of four; six potatoes instead of eight.

You know, Mr. Speaker, when I came in here it all fit into two bags, and I think that's highly appropriate. Now — I am going to save that chocolate bar, if you don't mind, Mr. Speaker — now what happens is the minimum wage earner, who used to walk out of the store with two bags, Mr. Speaker, walks out with one bag of groceries. And this is what they don't have, Mr. Speaker. There's the lettuce; they're not buying lettuce any more. There is one roll of toilet paper. There is the equivalent of a quarter of the sugar, half the hamburger, the cheese, Mr. Speaker, the bread, the chocolate bar, the potatoes, and the carrots. This is what they can't eat, and this, Mr. Speaker, is where the battle .. of the minimum wage is being fought, and it's being fought every day by the 30,000 to 40,000 workers in this province who can't afford this bag of groceries any more, Mr. Speaker. It's being fought by them on behalf of themselves and on behalf of their families, and there is absolutely no justification. The studies do not justify it; the statistics do not justify it; there is absolutely no justification for that government today to stand up and deny the minimum wage earners of this province a lousy quarter increase per hour, Mr. Speaker. Ten dollars a week is what we are talking about, Mr. Speaker.

So I think that for once the Member for St. Matthews should not be embarrassed but I think he should have a little empathy and pity on his caucus colleagues because they, Mr. Speaker, are the ones that have to walk out of here today knowing that once again, for the umpteenth time in the past 30 months, they have denied the low wage earners and the minimum wage earners of this province a decent living.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Are you ready for the question? The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if we could call it 5:30?

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed to call it 5:30? (Agreed) The hour being 5:30, I am leaving the Chair. The House will return at 8 o'clock in Committee of Supply.

The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. JORGENSEN: I wonder if I may move, seconded by the Attorney-General, that the House do now adjourn. Committee of Supply will be meeting both here in the House and in Room 254.

MOTION presented and carried and the House is accordingly adjourned and stands adjourned until 2:30 tomorrow afternoon. (Wednesday)