

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, 6 May, 1982

Time — 8:00 p.m.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY

SUPPLY - MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

MR. CHAIRMAN, Harry M. Harapiak (The Pas): We will call the Committee to order. We are on Municipal Affairs, 1.(d) Main Street Manitoba.
The Member for Swan River.

MR. D. M. (Doug) GOURLAY (Swan River): Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister can advise me if municipalities that form a business improvement area and maybe they are not necessarily interested in the Main Street Program, would the department have record of that business improvement area?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister.

HON. A.R. (Pete) ADAM (Ste. Rose): Yes, I am informed that there is a record.

MR. GOURLAY: In that case, I wonder if the Minister could advise how many, if any, business improvement areas have been formed to date.

MR. ADAM: There are two, up to this point in time, Mr. Chairman.

MR. GOURLAY: I think that was all I had.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's 1.(d) Main Street Manitoba—pass; 2. Municipal Board: (a) Salaries — the Member for Swan River.

MR. GOURLAY: The Municipal Board, I am wondering the Minister has replaced the board just recently. I wonder if he could advise the Committee whether he was unhappy with the previous board that was serving.

MR. ADAM: No, of course not, Mr. Chairman.

MR. GOURLAY: I wonder, then, if the Minister could advise why he replaced the board as of, I think, the 1st of April or something like that.

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, what we did is extend the term for three months, I believe, and it's usually traditional that when a new government comes in, they look at all the boards and commissions and they change them around. That is traditional. I am sure it was done in 1977 as well as 1981.

MR. GOURLAY: The Minister has announced the appointment of, I believe, 10 members to the board. Is he planning on expanding that board in the near future?

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, I think there are 11 appointments. Let me just check that for a moment. There are 11 members to the board. There has been a practice in the past, Mr. Chairman, to have 14 members

on the board. There have always been provisions or funding provided for 14 members, but they have never been appointed. Over the years, only 12 have been appointed. As a result of that, this year since we have never appointed the 14, we have reduced the funding for that allocation and there are 11 appointed at this point in time.

MR. GOURLAY: How are the members paid? I thought they were just paid for when they worked. Do they get a monthly . . .

MR. ADAM: They're paid a per diem, Mr. Chairman, whenever they sit. The Chairman, of course, Mr. Ackland, is a full-time position and I guess, perhaps, some staff. There are staff as well that are full-time positions. The members of the Municipal Board are paid on a per diem whenever they are sitting.

MR. GOURLAY: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I notice that the amount of money allocated for salaries is down slightly from last year and I was wondering the reason for that. Do you expect that there won't be as many hearings required?

MR. ADAM: No. Mr. Chairman, I just explained that to the member, that normally they have always provided funding for 14 members. That's been done over the years but they have apparently never appointed 14, only 12 were appointed so we always had a surplus. This year we decided there was no use asking for the appropriation if we were never using it and that is why it shows as a reduction. It has nothing to do with how many times they sit.

MR. GOURLAY: Mr. Chairman, I thought they just got paid per meeting when they sat so what difference would it make whether there were six on there or fifty? They only get paid when they meet and there's only so many per meeting. Is that not right?

MR. ADAM: The reason we have 11, 12, 14 members on the Board is so that there will be some flexibility. A lot of these people have other businesses and other occupations and they can't go to every meeting. It would disrupt their normal way of life and their normal business practise and so whenever they're called upon to come, if they can come they come, and that's why we try to appoint them on a regional basis as well so that there's not too much travelling involved.

MR. GOURLAY: I just don't understand that part of it. I wonder, does the government pick up all of the expenses of the Board's hearings now?

MR. ADAM: I am informed that we do, yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(a)—pass; 2.(b) Other Expenditures—pass.

Resolution No. 95. RESOLVE that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$307,800 for Municipal Affairs' for the Municipal Board' for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1983—pass;

Move on to No. 3. Municipal Budget and Finance, 3.(a) Salaries—pass.

The Member for Swan River.

MR. GOURLAY: I notice that has dropped slightly. What is the situation with respect to the reduction?

MR. ADAM: There is a reduction there due to staff turnover; that's where the reduction comes in.

MR. GOURLAY: So there's really no change.

MR. ADAM: No, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 3.(a) Salaries —pass; 3.(b) Other Expenditures —pass; 3.(c) Grants to Municipalities in Lieu of Taxes.

The Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G.W.J. (Gerry) MERCIER (St. Norbert): On (c), Mr. Chairman, the explanation indicates that this amount is to cover an increase to reflect 1982 payments plus a 6-percent increase to allow for mill-rate increases. I take it that's just an estimate of the mill-rate increases you expect in this year.

MR. ADAM: Yes.

MR. MERCIER: What was the actual figure last year?

MR. ADAM: We'll just check that out, Mr. Chairman. The amount last year was grants in lieu of taxes \$16,260,700.00.

MR. MERCIER: That was the amount budgeted for, what was the actual figure paid out?

MR. ADAM: The actual figure was \$16,015,100.00.

MR. MERCIER: That includes the grants to the City of Winnipeg including the grant on this building to the City of Winnipeg?

MR. ADAM: Yes, I'm advised that is correct.

MR. MERCIER: The amount paid on this building this year to the City of Winnipeg is the same as last year?

MR. ADAM: I believe so, yes.

MR. MERCIER: Is the Minister considering - I know there's a reference to that in Mr. Weir's report - any adjustment in that figure?

MR. ADAM: I guess that'll follow from the recommendations whatever is done with the recommendations will be dealt with at that time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Swan River.

MR. GOURLAY: I believe that the rural municipalities have met with the Minister and requested some consideration for payment of taxes on provincially-owned Crown lands and you haven't taken this into consideration in the Estimates here. I'm just wondering did you reject that proposal from municipalities?

MR. ADAM: We haven't rejected it; we are reviewing it and considering it at this time.

MR. GOURLAY: So there could be some revision in this if you decide to pay taxes on these Crown lands to . . .

MR. ADAM: That may well be.

MR. GOURLAY: I think that's all I have.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's 3.(c) —pass. 3.(d) Urban Transit Grants.

The Member for St. Norbert.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, as I understand it, according to the explanation, there is a 10 percent increase in Handi-Transit Grants, that is for municipalities providing transportation for the physically handicapped outside of the City of Winnipeg. Did the Minister impose a freeze on transit fares outside the City of Winnipeg?

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, there was no freeze on the fares outside of the City of Winnipeg.

MR. MERCIER: Can the Minister explain why they would be imposed in the city and not outside of the City of Winnipeg?

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, the fees outside the city haven't been changed for a number of years and that would be one of the reasons why there has been no restrictions on outside, the fees have been pretty constant, consistent for a number of years outside of the city.

MR. MERCIER: The Minister is saying there have been no increases in transit fares outside of the City of Winnipeg.

MR. ADAM: No, not as far as we know.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, I think this the right department, I asked the Minister. It seems to me there was consideration being given to expansion of Handi-Transit programs throughout the province, is this Minister responsible or is the Honourable Minister of Highways and Transportation responsible?

MR. ADAM: The Department of Highways is responsible for that. You'll get him next year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 3.(d).

MR. GOURLAY: All of the Handi-Transit that is covered under the Minister of Transportation?

MR. ADAM: Brandon comes under our department.

MR. GOURLAY: That's the only one?

MR. ADAM: Just Brandon is ours.

MR. GOURLAY: What is the situation with respect to the purchase of buses this year in the City of Brandon?

MR. ADAM: Yes, there have been two buses purchased for the City of Brandon, Mr. Chairman.

MR. GOURLAY: This is the last year for that current agreement, or is it . . . ?

MR. ADAM: The program runs till 1984, I think.

MR. GOURLAY: There is an arrangement for the purchase of buses each year until 1984?

MR. ADAM: That's correct.

MR. GOURLAY: Is Brandon the only one that participates in the purchase of buses under this program?

MR. ADAM: That's correct.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 3.(b)—pass.

Resolution No. 96. RESOLVED THAT there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$19,314,700 for Municipal Affairs, Municipal Budget and Finance for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1983—pass.

No. 4. Municipal Assessments, Salaries.
The Member for Swan River.

MR. GOURLAY: I believe the Minister explained earlier that there were 12 new positions or 12 SMYs in the Municipal Assessment Branch and I see where at the present time, there's some closed ones advertising for trainee positions.

MR. ADAM: Yes, there is.

MR. GOURLAY: Three positions?

MR. ADAM: Yes, three.

MR. GOURLAY: What other positions would be included in the 12?

MR. ADAM: There's support staff, I believe, eh? They're all trainees, I'm informed.

MR. GOURLAY: These trainees are to be located in various regions?

MR. ADAM: That's correct, Mr. Chairman.

MR. GOURLAY: What is the current situation with respect to assessments at this time? How many municipalities have not been reassessed in the last five years?

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, it will take a few minutes to accumulate that information. Staff is tabulating that now. It will take a few minutes to count them up.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Maybe we can get back to it. The Member for Swan River.

MR. ADAM: He has another question perhaps.

MR. GOURLAY: Yeah, I wonder, it has been indicated I think for several years now that there has been

a shortage of assessors to be able to maintain the reassessment, to keep it up-to-date under the requirement of the statutes to have reassessment done every five years and you've made provision for some new assessors this year. Will this suffice to do the catch-up work?

MR. ADAM: No, I don't think it will, Mr. Chairman, but it's certainly going to assist in speeding up the process.

MR. GOURLAY: With respect to the Assessment Review Committee's recommendations - I realize of course that these recommendations have only come in recently - but how do you see the recommendations affecting the whole reassessment procedure? Will we still need extra people to, I guess, do the evaluations and catch-up work? Is this right or is there some other method that we can use other than Manpower?

MR. ADAM: At the present time we would need additional staff to do a catch-up and move toward computerization of the system. That's perhaps in the long term or the intermediate term but move into that direction.

MR. GOURLAY: Mr. Chairman, a question was asked of the Minister in the last couple of days regarding the assessment review recommendations and the Minister advised that staff were reviewing the report and would be reporting back to the Minister in due course. I wonder, when does the Minister expect to get this information from his staff?

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, it's pretty difficult to give an exact date. As the member is aware it's quite a technical document and there's a lot of recommendations contained therein. The process is already started by staff to study the recommendations. It's not going to be done overnight, it's going to take some time to look at all the recommendations and try and analyze the implications of the recommendation. Of course, the recommendations themselves indicate that it will be 1987 before we could implement those recommendations by the time they're all analyzed and put in place, even if we were to accept them.

MR. GOURLAY: I'd just like to ask the Minister, does he not feel that it would be advisable for the government to take a position with respect to the recommendations before he goes back to meet with the various municipal organizations. I think he indicated in another question yesterday, or the day before, that he was wanting some more feedback from the various people in the province, including the UMM and the MAUM and other interested people in Manitoba, and that the government wasn't going to do anything, I think his words were, until he did get some feedback. I would think it would be important for the government to take a position with respect to the recommendations, to go out, if they're going to hold meetings throughout the province to meet with the various municipal people, so they would at least have a starting position.

To go back now to the people I'm sure they're going

to be wondering what's going on when recommendations have been laid before the government and a committee goes back out into the country wanting to get more information from the people, they're going to be wondering what's happened to the recommendations that the government has already received. I'm wondering what is the Minister's reason for not taking a position with respect to the recommendations before meeting with these various municipal people, for instance, the Municipal Advisory Committee.

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, the member knows and it's quite a technical document and I'm sure that the local municipalities out there would want to have sufficient time to analyse the report as well as staff. That's what we're doing now, we're attempting to analyse what's in the document and I'm sure that the municipalities as well will want to have sufficient time to look at this document and once they have looked at it and then we go ahead and meet with them and see what the reaction is to it. That's what we want. There maybe other alternatives to the recommendations; there maybe some other way to proceed on some of the recommendations. It doesn't mean because the recommendations are there that they will all be satisfactory to local government out there, or to the people that will be affected by it. We want to know how the recommendations will affect people and we'd like to measure what shifts will take place as opposed to, say, rural and urban, out in the municipality, for instance, that may have urban areas within the municipality and so on. This is all information that we would like to have, of course, and know and we want the people out there to know what's happening before we start implementing - this is a major change, Mr. Chairman, that is being undertaken to try and resolve a very, very difficult problem. We don't want to create problems we want to eliminate the ones that are there.

We've been with the present system for many, many years and once we do make a change we want to make sure that we're not making an error or that we're making a mistake; we want to be sure that we're doing the right thing. We know that some of the other jurisdictions have changed their systems as well, British Columbia and Toronto and so on. We would want to get some information from there, how the changes have affected those areas. This is why it's not something that's going to be done overnight but when it is done and when it is finalized that we have something that we can be proud of and not gone ahead to rashly and without a lot of dialogue with the people that'll be affected by it. That's the position that I feel we should take and I think that's a responsible position.

MR. GOURLAY: Yes, I realize, Mr. Chairman, that all of the municipal people will not be in agreement with the recommendations that have been brought forward but I think the onus is now on government to take a position with respect to those recommendations. The municipal people have supplied the information and it's been worked over and recommendations brought to the government. Unless the government goes back with some kind of position on those recommendations, what kind of dialogue can the Minister expect from the municipalities at this point without having some position on them?

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, that is the reason why I've asked staff to look at the implications of the report. Let's not forget, Mr. Chairman, that it took the Committee 2.5 years to put it together and if he thinks that we're going to study it in 2.5 weeks or in 2.5 months, well I would like to inform the member that that's just not possible. The staff can't do it; I don't think the member himself can do it; I don't think the local government out there can do it. I think they're going to have to have time to review this and see what the implications are and that's the reason why we're taking this approach.

MR. GOURLAY: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate there's been a lot of work go into the recommendations. My concern is why go back to the municipal people until you have this position? You indicated that you weren't going to do anything until you got some more feedback from the people out in the province.

MR. ADAM: I hope that when we do go out with them that we will be able to determine some of the implications of the recommendation of the report. I think we will be in a position to illustrate what would take place if we implement the major recommendations and so on. That's what my staff will be doing in the next while. It may take a number of months to determine just what the implications of this report will mean to people of Manitoba and I hope when we do go out and have hearings that we'll be able to tell the people: "Well, here's the report, this is what it means. What do you think of it? You think we should go ahead with this or not, or is there another way, is there another alternative rather than this way?" Certainly we want to have something to tell the people out there but it's not going to be done overnight.

MR. GOURLAY: I'm encouraged by your comments, Mr. Minister, that there will be a position taken before you go back to meet with the people. Is this not what you're saying?

MR. ADAM: The member is saying that I would have a position. I have never said I would have a position, I said we would know what the document is saying and we would be able to tell the people out there in the local government, that this is what the document says; what will happen if we implement these recommendations; what do you think of it, do you think we should go ahead. This is the feedback I want to get. I want the people to either approve or disapprove, that's their prerogative. We want to know how they receive this report.

MR. GOURLAY: I wonder if the Minister would comment on his thoughts towards the recommendation of the single assessing authority in the province rather than the two that we have in place at the present time.

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, again, I would like to have my staff analyse the implications of this. It's an option and certainly we will be looking at it very closely and see if that is the way to proceed. I think it sounds interesting and we'll certainly look at it very closely.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Norbert.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, the Minister said that he intends to have a legislative committee hold hearings is that correct?

MR. ADAM: Yes.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, could the Minister indicate what consultation he has had with the Mayor and the official delegation of the City of Winnipeg before he has decided to proceed in this way?

MR. ADAM: I haven't had any delegations from the city to this point in time.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, has the Minister had any discussions at all with the City of Winnipeg about the report?

MR. ADAM: The Minister of Urban Affairs will certainly be having a dialogue with them; we have not had any.

MR. MERCIER: Has the Minister had any discussion with the Minister of Urban Affairs about the City of Winnipeg's approach to the report?

MR. ADAM: Not to deal with that question, no.

MR. MERCIER: Well, Mr. Chairman, I am amazed that a report which the Minister has indicated has been developed for some two-and-a-half years in close consultation with the City of Winnipeg, as I understand it Mr. Weir and his committee worked very closely with Mr. Reimer and Mr. Schmidt from the City in providing information and developing this report, now the report is received and the Minister is telling us that he's embarked upon a unilateral approach to the consideration of that report, without any consultation with the Mayor and the official delegation of the City or, it would appear, the Minister of Urban Affairs. This is a report that affects not only the area outside of the City of Winnipeg but it's very important to the City of Winnipeg. Can the Minister offer any excuse at all for not discussing it with the City?

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, we have received a brief from the City of Winnipeg and we have examined it, the staff has examined it, and we have sent them a copy of the report, of course, and they will be analyzing it as well at this particular time, I presume. That is the reason we will have the meetings, so we can dialogue with them; that is the reason for the committee and we hope that the Member for St. Norbert will be on that committee to dialogue with the City of Winnipeg and the Town of Dauphin and the Towns of Neepawa and Morden.

MR. MERCIER: Well, Mr. Chairman, following along the comment to the Member for Swan River, the City of Winnipeg must have, if it's equivalent to population, significant portion of assessment in the total province and they have had difficulties, as have municipalities outside the City of Winnipeg. Does it not seem to the Minister that rather than embark upon Legislative Committee hearings - at least making that decision at this moment to embark upon Legislative Committee

hearings, when we read comments from officials of the municipal organizations that there's been enough hearings and there's been enough discussion and it's time for some decisions by the government - would it not appear to the Minister to be more practical to have his department review the report, receive their recommendations and at the same time have the City conduct its own review and make its recommendations and then maybe there would at least be some interim steps that could be taken to resolve some of the problems.

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, the report was tabled on April 19th, as he is aware. The City, I'm sure needs just as much time, perhaps more time, than rural municipalities because of the complexities of the assessment in the City of Winnipeg and they're going to require more time, I would say, than an ordinary municipality. So we will dialogue with them and that is the reason why we will be setting up a committee once they've had time to have a thorough review of the recommendations, then we will dialogue with them as to see whether they approve of them or disapprove of them.

MR. MERCIER: Well, Mr. Chairman, that may well be true but it's an assumption by the Minister, he hasn't even discussed it with the Mayor and the official delegation, all it is is an assumption. Maybe that would be their position but I'm appalled that he hasn't had the courtesy to have a discussion with them before deciding to take the approach of Legislative Committee hearings.

The Minister indicated the other day, Mr. Chairman, that he would be introducing a Bill to freeze assessments. Can he indicate for how many years that will be?

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, in the letter that we have written to the municipalities and to the City of Winnipeg, when we mailed out the report we indicated to them that we were sending them the report and that if they wanted to discuss these recommendations with us we would be prepared to discuss it with them. So, we haven't discounted that whatsoever, we have invited them to come and discuss it with us. I say to the member we have indicated that once they have had time to study the report we will be setting up a committee and we will dialogue with them on what they have found and what staff has found and the studies that we have made in regard to how this will affect certain municipalities and so on in urban areas. We think this is the best way to proceed. It's a cautious way to proceed and I think we should be proceeding very cautiously without rushing into something that we may regret later on.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, I asked the Minister for how long he would propose to freeze assessment in the Bill he intends to introduce at this session.

MR. ADAM: When the Bill is brought to the House the member will then find out.

MR. MERCIER: Why can't we find out now, Mr. Chairman?

MR. ADAM: Because you will find out when it's tabled in the House.

MR. MERCIER: Now I know how the City of Winnipeg feels.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 4.(a)—pass

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, the Member for Swan River wanted to know how many municipalities had gone beyond the five-year requirement. There are 111 municipalities plus several communities in Northern Manitoba that are over the five years.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Virden.

MR. HARRY GRAHAM (Virden): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, in the proposal of the Minister to go take a travelling road show out . . .

MR. ADAM: Oh, is that what it is.

MR. GRAHAM: . . . has the Minister not got any proposals to put before them for their consideration at that time?

MR. ADAM: The intent of the committee meetings would be to convey to the municipalities and the people out there what the implications are of the recommendations, to get their feedback on that.

MR. GRAHAM: Well, Mr. Chairman, I believe the municipalities are already aware of that. They have been in consultation with the commission not once, not twice, but in some cases three times during the preparation of the report and if you're asking elected officials to come to meetings, I think it's important that they have some proposals that they should be attempting to discuss. To go to a meeting with your cap in hand I think you could be going in 50 different directions at one time and you would probably end up with more confusion at the completion than you would at the beginning and, I think, from what I've heard so far tonight, there's enough confusion already.

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, I would advise the honourable member that, yes, there have been briefs presented to the Committee, and perhaps more than once, but there has been very little dialogue. There have been groups that have met with the Committee and presented briefs but there hasn't been any general dialogue with the public at all and I think the public have to be aware of what's happening around them.

It is my feeling, at least, and the feeling of this government, that before we do make major changes, such as we are proposing to do at the present time, that at least people understand what's happening around them. I think that's the only responsible way to proceed.

MR. GRAHAM: Mr. Chairman, if the Minister is going to say that the commission report is the government proposal that they're going to discuss that's well and good, but from what I have heard from the Minister on previous occasions he wasn't too sure if he was going

to accept any of it or part of it or even going to consider parts of it. I think it would be appropriate for the municipal people, before they go to a public meeting, to know what parts of the report the Minister was considering. Some parts he could say, "I want to leave for five years," some he doesn't want to do anything with at all. I think it would be more beneficial and you would have more meaningful dialogue if the Minister could indicate, before those public hearings are held, what areas the Minister wants to proceed with or to seek their opinions on.

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure if the member is suggesting that we accept these recommendations completely and implement them immediately without talking to the farmers out there; whether they want to have their farm buildings assessed and whether the local governments are in favour of that. There are serious implications that are going to affect people. We are affecting people's lives out there, Mr. Chairman, and this is something that I don't think we should be rushed into. We are going to look at this; the staff is doing that now. It's going to take some time before we can get a report back from staff on what the implications are and, until that is done, there's no way that we're going to make up our minds one way or the other until we get a report back. I think if the members opposite were in government they would be taking the long look at this themselves, Mr. Chairman.

MR. GRAHAM: Mr. Chairman, I'm not suggesting that the Minister stand up tomorrow and say: "This is what we're going to do and what proposals we're going to take forward." I think there is time for this report, but in doing that he has to establish a time frame because he has indicated he is going to bring forward a bill to freeze assessments. So far he hasn't told us how long he's going to freeze it for. We've had a freeze on for two years now. The discrepancies are getting greater all the time. There has to be some changes made fairly soon so there is a certain element of urgency in that respect. It would be my hope that the Minister will act fairly quickly, and when I say fairly quickly I mean within the next 12 months.

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, the Committee recommended that the freeze be extended and they have laid out a timetable in the recommendation and I appreciate the honourable member's views and we will certainly try and proceed this as fast as we can; speed it up as fast as we can, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Pembina.

MR. DONALD ORCHARD (Pembina): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I note by the explanation sheet that was handed out that there are to be 11 additional assessors brought on staff. What will that make the assessment staff complement?

MR. ADAM: I wonder, would the honourable member repeat that. I was just in consultation here with the Deputy.

MR. ORCHARD: There are 11 assessors as additional staff in this year's Estimates. With the 11, what's the

total complement of assessors?

MR. ADAM: There were 128 previous to the 12 SMY's for this year; that's 140, Mr. Chairman.

MR. ORCHARD: Assessors? 140 assessors?

MR. ADAM: That's staff. Mr. Chairman, the staff is tabulating the number at the present time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Member for Pembina, would you care to go ahead and we can get back to that when you get the answer.

MR. ORCHARD: Well, I want to get the answer on that before too much longer but perhaps the Minister would care to answer the next question.

In rural Manitoba, what is happening right now with farm assessment particularly? Is there any re-assessment going on?

MR. ADAM: Yes, Mr. Chairman, there is assessments going on at the present time.

MR. ORCHARD: Now, in this re-assessment, is there an increased effort going on right now or is this part of the normal re-assessment that, from time to time, has taking place in the province?

MR. ADAM: It's normal.

MR. ORCHARD: Are the assessors now valuing buildings in areas where they formally had not put a value on farm buildings?

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, they are following the legislative requirements.

MR. ORCHARD: Which are?

MR. ADAM: All buildings, Mr. Chairman are being assessed.

MR. ORCHARD: When was that? When the Minister mentions that's the legislative requirement, how long has that been the legislative requirement?

MR. ADAM: I'm advised it goes back to 1944, Mr. Chairman.

MR. ORCHARD: Have previous reassessments valued the buildings or is this a new compliance with the legislation?

MR. ADAM: Yes and no, is the answer?

MR. ORCHARD: This is a wonderful monologue we're having here.

MR. ADAM: We're doing it for all of them now, Mr. Chairman.

MR. ORCHARD: Now, when you say they're doing it for all of them, I assume you mean all of the municipalities? Which municipalities? Okay, I won't ask which because that may be a little difficult to come by, but

roughly what percentage of municipalities in the past had an assessment done which assessed all farm buildings?

MR. ADAM: Approximately 10 to 20 percent, I'm advised.

MR. ORCHARD: And would that 10 or 20 percent have been municipalities in and about the Winnipeg area, Brandon area, the major urban centres?

MR. ADAM: It could be anywhere, I'm advised.

MR. ORCHARD: How long has the assessment now been going to take in all of the buildings?

MR. ADAM: Since 1979, Mr. Chairman.

MR. ORCHARD: Now part of the recommendation of the Weir Report indicates certain new measures in terms of farm outbuilding assessment, etc., would the Minister, in terms of a policy of his government, be in favour of taxation of farm buildings, other than a residence, say the hog barn on a family farm or the grain storage or the machinery shed?

MR. ADAM: That is a policy matter that will be decided later on.

MR. ORCHARD: Well, I appreciate it will probably be a policy decision decided later on, but surely the Minister must have an opinion as Minister of Municipal Affairs with the responsibility of the assessment and levying of taxation on the rural municipalities of the province, he must have a feeling one way or another as to whether that is a worthy change in taxation or an unworthy change in taxation that he would not support.

MR. ADAM: In the present economic times that we're going through with a very fragile agriculture economy at the present time, I would want to study it very thoroughly what the impact would be before I would come to a decision on that.

MR. ORCHARD: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm going to make a liberal interpretation of what the Minister says and I'm going to say that he would not favour farm outbuilding taxation.

MR. ADAM: Well, Mr. Chairman, I said that in view of the very fragile - I'll repeat it - in view of the very fragile situation of the farm economy any new assessment regulations that we undertake, I would certainly want to study very carefully on what impact it would have on the farm economy before I would want to assess outbuildings, or whatever it is they are.

MR. ORCHARD: Well, needless to say and I am quite sure the Minister is well aware of this, there is a fairly large concern and, I suppose, it stems from uncertainty in the rural community about the potential assessment in taxation of all farm buildings, including the farm residence which now is, of course, tax exempt if a person makes the majority of his net income from farming purposes. I suppose that part of

that concern is out there because the farm community is quite aware of the Weir Report. The Weir Study on assessment. Naturally, when assessors now are coming along in a lot of municipalities and in doing the reassessment, where before they had only assessed the land and now they are assessing the buildings, that further fuels the speculation that this government is going to be taxing all farm buildings. I've been doing my doggonedest to tell them, no, this government wouldn't do such a thing. I'm trying to be as fair as I can with this Minister and this government, but I think the Minister can surely appreciate the uncertainty and concern. He mentioned himself, I think he termed it the fragile economic situation that's out there in rural Manitoba right now. Well that fragile economic situation would be in view of the farmer-owner exasperated by farm building assessment and taxation, hence the concern.

Hence, my question earlier, which wasn't a facetious one, to try to put the Minister on any kind of a hot seat, hence my question is to how this Minister views, as Minister responsible for Municipal Affairs, the assessment of a farm building taxation? Because if the Minister clearly said that, for instance, only farm homes would ever be assessed and taxed and the major investment in grain storage and machinery sheds, in livestock production buildings would not be taxed, it would certainly alleviate a number of the concerns that are out there right now with this reassessment going on, adding to the assessment rolls, farm buildings. That's why I ask for the Minister's clarification and I would hope that he could provide us with that this evening.

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the member's comments, but I would point out to him that the assessment of the farm buildings, I guess, really got under way when his government was in office and if we were to accept the recommendations of the assessment review committee, I guess, we would be assessing some of the farm buildings. From what I have been hearing from the members that have been asking questions, up until this point in time, is that we should go ahead as soon as possible with the recommendations. There seems to be a sense of urgency and I've been trying to say that we shouldn't proceed too fast, we should take a close look at this; that's my position. What I'm hearing is, hurry up, let's get the show on the road. I am saying that I don't want to do that, I want to have a very long serious look at what is happening. I appreciate the member's comments, but is he saying that we should go ahead and assess farm buildings, or should we not? I'm trying to avoid going into the recommendations of the Assessment Review Committee because we'll be here for another three months.

That is why we're having the staff study the report and give us some recommendations on what the implications are, then we go out and dialogue with the people that will be affected by it, because there has been no dialogue with the general public. There has been dialogue with some of the organized groups such as Local Government Districts and municipalities and other groups have come in and presented briefs to the Assessment Review Committee, but there hasn't been that wide dialogue that we would

like to hear before we proceed with any of these recommendations.

MR. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, this Minister when he's unable to come up with an answer, provides his view of what's been going on, in his view the members in the Opposition are urging him to proceed immediately with the Weir Commission and implement its recommendations. That, the Minister well knows is not what he's being asked to do tonight and any attempt by him to put that on the record will lead him to rather dangerous waters. So I might caution the Minister that he not try to put words in the Opposition's mouth.

What we are trying to find out tonight and I don't know whether the Minister either is able to tell us or maybe, more pointedly, willing to tell us, is his feelings on the farm building assessment. Because now there's a number of municipalities that are under reassessment right now; buildings are being assessed; there is concern out there. The Weir Report has been tabled; there has been the consultation; the briefs from individuals to the Weir Commission in the last two years and they'd like to get a feeling for what this government and what this new Minister feels about the issue of farm building taxation.

The Minister could hold himself in good light if he would clarify that issue for rural Manitobans; until he does there is going to be that suspicious view overhanging and I only add to the Minister that his colleague, the Minister of Agriculture, has not endeared this government to rural Manitobans. I would suggest he try not to do the same as his Minister of Agriculture, but rather provide some forthright statements and leadership to the rural community and provide an answer to the question I've been asking him tonight.

MR. ADAM: Well, I really thank the member for his comments. I think maybe we're closer together than I thought we were. I was getting the impression that the idea of establishing a legislative committee was a waste of time and that we should deal with the recommendations and do something. That's the impression that I've been getting in the discussion we've had up this point in time and I'm pleased to hear that that is not the case now. I get a clear picture that the members opposite do not want us to proceed too quickly on this and they want us to take a long look at it. I appreciate that, if that is the position now. I want to say to the honourable member that there is no way that we're going to go out and make decisions that will hurt farmers or put them out of business. We want to see the measure of shifts that are going to take place on the recommendations if they are implemented, and if I understand correctly now the members opposite do not want me to proceed too quickly, I'm very pleased with that.

MR. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, I'll let the Minister develop his confused positions for pro and con and continue his monologue with himself we —(Interjection)— no, it's monologue with this Minister it's not a dialogue.

We don't have to worry in the Opposition of this government proceeding too quickly on any, so we're not really concerned about that. After all, we did have

promised this Beef Income Assurance Program, Emergency Interest Relief none of which has come to bear, so we're not worried about too quickly. Could the Minister now answer how many assessors they have?

MR. ADAM: There are 94, Mr. Chairman.

MR. ORCHARD: Is that 94 with the 11 new ones, or 94 with the old ones?

MR. ADAM: That doesn't include the 12 SMYs, because they haven't been authorized yet, I presume.

MR. ORCHARD: Do you intend, if and when you get your Estimates through, to hire all 11 assessors that you're providing SMY funding for in these Estimates?

MR. ADAM: We certainly hope to, if we can obtain them.

MR. ORCHARD: So that means that there would be 105 assessors on staff sometime this fiscal year?

MR. ADAM: Yes, that is correct.

MR. ORCHARD: Well, what will be the frequency of reassessment now with the 105 assessors?

MR. ADAM: The problem is that may not change; it may not be a greater change immediately because it takes four years to train an assessor. So it's a slow process to get people on staff and it's unfortunate that we haven't had staff sooner than this. I understand that the department have been requesting additional assessors for a number of years now; for whatever reason, whether it was because of lack of funding or cut-backs or restraint, staff was never acquired and we were very fortunate that I was able to have the approval to obtain 12 SMYs.

MR. ORCHARD: Four years of training - is that at the university, on the job, technical school, where?

MR. ADAM: It's on-the-job training. They start at a certain level; they do certain types of assessment and they just keep moving on and slowly . . . some of it is pretty technical, I'm sure the member knows. To become a qualified appraiser is not an easy task.

MR. ORCHARD: How does the assessment branch establish farm land values?

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, I'll get Mr. Reimer here to assist me on that. I am informed that the method used is, first, productivity of the soil per acre, established per acre and related to the sales data, is how they arrive at assessment values.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, John Plohman (Dauphin): The Member for Pembina.

MR. ORCHARD: Is the Canadian Land Inventory System used at all?

MR. ADAM: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. ORCHARD: Okay, so you go on the sales data and I would assume that would be on comparable soil types in the immediate vicinity if there's been any recent sales. How do you establish the productivity? Do you go by Department of Agriculture estimates on what productivity should be or do you go to actual productivity?

MR. ADAM: Manitoba Soil Surveys and Manitoba Crop Insurance and Department of Agriculture, so there a number of areas where they get soil tests and so on. There are a number of areas of how they arrived at productivity.

MR. ORCHARD: Is that productivity information computerized?

MR. ADAM: No, not at this time.

MR. ORCHARD: Would that not be something that could be computerized relatively easily to determine a certain productivity value for every acre of land in the province?

MR. ADAM: Yes, I think there's a start on it already but it's certainly a direction to go into; that we should be going into.

MR. ORCHARD: When was that start made, Mr. Chairman?

MR. ADAM: It is just under way now, Mr. Chairman, perhaps about two weeks ago.

MR. ORCHARD: The assessor, when he calls on a farmyard, he would naturally now be taking a look at all of the building that are there; their condition, their size, their structural soundness and he would also, I presume, undertake discussion with the farmer on land-type, any unique problems he's got on his land so that if he had, say, some alkali patches or some highly eroded spots or whatever, that would be noted by the assessor?

MR. ADAM: Yes, that is the normal procedure.

MR. ORCHARD: Would these assessors, as a matter of routine, ask a farmer for an opinion of the value of land owned by his neighbour? For instance, would an assessor go into my yard and ask me what I thought about my neighbour's land; how good it was; how well he farmed it; how productive it was?

MR. ADAM: He probably could, I suppose, if it would assist him on finding out the type of land in the area, and I'm sure that he would.

MR. ORCHARD: Well, I guess maybe that's one area that I have some concerns about, because neighbours have a habit of talking with one another after the revenueurs have been there — because anybody from government is sort of a revenueur — and quite frankly, Mr. Minister, they object to what they consider to be some cross-examination as to the value of their land because the assessor has asked them certain questions about their land, what it can do and

whatnot, then they find out a couple of days later when they're having coffee with the neighbour, that the assessor was asking the neighbour questions about the neighbour's land and they don't think that is a proper way to proceed. They have generally given information.

I think, in 99.9 percent of the cases, they've generally given good data, good information and they do object to the implication that maybe they weren't exactly giving straight information and playing ball with the assessor and that the assessor has to verify what was said by confirming it with a neighbour and that causes some anxiety. I think the Minister would want to examine that as a procedure used by the assessor, so that the kind of concerns that can crop up in rural Manitoba don't crop up to the detriment of everyone involved.

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, I doubt very much whether there's cross-examination taking place in the light that the member suggests. In any event, no one is obligated to answer any questions, in any event, if they don't wish to. They're not forced to answer any questions.

MR. ORCHARD: Well then, Mr. Chairman, why ask the questions of a neighbour about his neighbour's land?

MR. ADAM: If the member has any specific case that he wishes to bring to our attention we'd be glad to look at it, if he has a specific complaint to make. I would not want to leave on the record the impression that this is a common practice that he is complaining about and that there is a problem out there.

I think the assessors will ask general questions of how the area is and what kind of soil and what kind of crops and so on. I would expect that would be the normal procedure. But if the member is suggesting that there is something onerous going on out there, or subversive, or whatever you want to call it, I think most farmers are quite willing to provide the information that is asked in a proper manner about land, soil, crops and whatever. So if the member has a specific case that he wants to draw to my attention, we are certainly prepared to look into it.

MR. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, the Minister has indicated that is the type of questioning and now he's saying that it's general questioning about crops in the area. I'm referring to specific questioning about a neighbour's land by assessors and it isn't of a general nature, it was of a specific nature. I question the necessity of that. I know the Minister has indicated that if there is a specific area he would be pleased to look into it.

Mr. Chairman, one other question I'd like to ask the Minister on assessment. We have, for instance, some intensive livestock operations throughout the province which are on a very limited land base and operate primarily by buying their feedstocks from neighbouring farms or from feed mills. These are major broiler operations, laying-egg operations, hog barns, feedlots; those kinds of programs aren't what one would classify a family farm. They are often shareholder-owned agribusinesses, yet the buildings aren't

assessed or taxed. Does the Minister have any feeling for how those operations should possibly contribute to the taxation, municipal and school tax, in the area they're located in.?

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, I think what the member is referring to is building-intensive operations where there isn't a very large landholding as opposed to other conventional-type farms. These are more building-intensive and I think the Review Committee has looked at this and is probably one of the recommendations - I haven't read all the report yet myself - probably that is in there and that is something that will be dealt with when we arrive at a decision.

MR. ORCHARD: Does the Minister have a feeling as to how those operations should be taxed, if they should be taxed at all? That's what I'm asking him, does the Minister believe they should be assessed and taxed or does he think they should maintain their tax-free status, because there generally is not a residence associated with these intensive livestock operations. So, does the Minister believe that because they don't fall into the traditional family farm definition, does he believe they should be assessed and taxed as an agribusiness much similar to the assessment raised on a fertilizer bulk plant, for instance, or a commercial seed-cleaning plant, those types of operations?

MR. ADAM: Yes, Mr. Chairman, this is one of the things that I would want my staff to look at very closely and evaluate. We would want to study the impact of some of these situations that have come up. I know we've had to look at some of them already. Some municipalities have farms in their areas where they're building-intensive and unable to tax the buildings. So, this is one of the things that the staff will be studying and looking at in relations to the recommendations and hopefully that we can address when a decision is made arising out of the recommendations, so to speak.

MR. ORCHARD: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'll paint a scenario for the Minister so he can't keep on saying that the staff is going to study this because he's the politician and he's the Minister that's going to have to make recommendations.

Let's assume a scenario where staff recommends that intensive livestock operations should be assessed and taxed. What would the Minister do with that recommendation? Would he say no; would he say yes?

MR. ADAM: That's a hypothetical question.

MR. ORCHARD: It's not hypothetical.

MR. ADAM: The member is raising a hypothetical question. We don't know whether the staff is not going to make recommendations of what should be taxed or what shouldn't be taxed. All they're going to say is what the impact would be if they were taxed or not taxed, that is what they're going to say. They're not going to advise the Minister on whether it should be taxed or not.

MR. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, you see we get back to this problem of the Minister wanting to take a committee of MLAs, I would assume, from both sides of the House, out to the province to listen theoretically to observations based on the Weir Report and its recommendations. Unless the farm community, or rural community, has some idea of where this Minister believes the report should go, what are they going to come and tell you? What are they going to speak to? If I was a farmer coming to that committee of MLAs, you know what I'd tell you? I'd tell the committee, don't tax anything land or buildings. Then, what would you do with it? You'd hear from the farmers; you'd dialogue with them, as you say, but, what would you get from it because nobody wants to pay taxes. So, what would your travelling committee of MLAs tell you if every single farmer came in and said, don't bother me with taxes?

MR. ADAM: Well, Mr. Chairman, the member well knows that, sure, nobody wants to be taxed. The farmers are reasonable the same as anybody else. Nobody likes to pay taxes but taxed we are going to be whether we want to or not. If we want services we're going to have to be taxed. I say that the outcome of these meetings will be productive. We will be able to get views once we have advised people what the implications are and, sure, we may have to make some decisions. You know, if you look at the report and it gives the headline that says "A fair way to share." I think the Member for Pembina is selling the farmers short. I think the farmers want to pay a fair share of their tax but they don't want to be overtaxed; they want to pay a fair share. If he's saying that is not the case he's not talking to the same farmers that I talk to because all farmers are prepared to pay a fair share of their tax but they don't want to be overtaxed. That is the job of this government to see that they are not being abused, Mr. Chairman.

MR. ORCHARD: Well, Mr. Chairman, the Minister says that farmers don't want to be overtaxed. Farmers today consider themselves to be overtaxed in terms of land. When you go to them with your MLA listening committee, dialogue committee, call it what you will, are you going to present them with three scenarios and the costs? Are you going to present them with the scenario of taxing land only, their land; are you going to present them with the second scenario of taxing bare land and the home; and the third scenario of taxing bare land and all buildings and explain to them what would happen to a given model? Are you going to have that kind of information available as a presentation to these groups?

MR. ADAM: Yes, we hope to have that kind of information.

MR. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, 'hope to have' is not good enough. What's the point of having that group of MLAs go out and take time and spend a lot of money talking to rural Manitobans if you're not going to have that kind of information, if they don't have information on the impact? I would say that's not a 'hope to have' that's a 'definitely will have' or else there's no point to your travelling show.

MR. ADAM: I don't consider, Mr. Chairman, that it's going to be a show; this is a very serious undertaking. I think the members opposite are making light of this and I don't think it's a light issue, I think it's a very important and heavy issue that we're dealing with. We will have the information. Certainly we're not going to go out there with nothing in our hands, we're going to have sufficient information there to, at least, advise the people what the implications are so that they can at least know what's happening. That's been my position; we're not going out there just for a junket, I want to tell the honourable member that. I'm sure he doesn't want to be on that kind of a junket and neither do I. We want to go out there to try and achieve something.

MR. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, that is exactly why we've been posing these questions to the Minister. Where does he stand on farm home taxation? Where does he stand on farm building taxation? Where does he stand on intensive livestock industry taxation that are outside of the normal family farm criterion? Because, unless the Minister has these kinds of positions in front of the rural community to gather their advice for and against taking such a move he will have a travelling road show and not the kind of meaningful show that he says he wants to have and a kind of an information-gathering group that can provide him with some pretty positive recommendations. That's why we're asking him tonight where he stands on a number of these very important issues that the farm community is asking each and every one of us right now. Unless they have an idea, as I say, of what you want or what you intend to do they're all going to come in and say don't tax my home, don't tax my buildings and lower the tax on my farm land because it's too high right now.

Unless the Minister sets up some criterion as to what he hopes to achieve out of the recommendations of the Weir Report, his group of MLAs travelling about the province will gather the same kind of pro-and-con information and a nice summary of opinion from 21 different sources and 21 different views as is contained in the Weir Report and you won't have any more than you have right now unless you narrow it down and put up some targets. It takes some political guts to do that, Mr. Chairman, I must say, because nobody wants to hear maybe that their home is going to be taxed or their farm buildings are going to be taxed. But you're going to get opinion on it if you present them with that as an objective and give them the numbers of what it will cost them land only, land plus home, or land plus all buildings. That's why I would like the Minister, before he takes that group on the road, tell Manitobans what your thoughts are, where you think it should go. After all, you are the Minister responsible and you have got a report with a number of recommendations to you, in order to resolve a very serious inequities in the assessment system in rural Manitoba.

MR. ADAM: Yes, Mr. Chairman, that is why I've been saying all evening that we don't want to proceed too quickly; we want to have all the information possible that we can obtain before going out to meet with people and we will be prepared when we do go out, to

present several scenarios, several alternatives and situations that we have evaluated. That's what the staff will be doing between now and the time that we do go out, so that we can have a clear example of what really would happen if we recommend this recommendation, or if we put in this recommendation, or we don't put in that and so on.

That is the whole purpose of the exercise is to make sure that they understand what's happening but we have to understand it first. And what I hear tonight is the member wants me to make a decision of what's going to happen next fall or whenever we go out. That is what the member is asking me to do; to make a decision tonight of the recommendation of that report. I want to tell him quite frankly that I'm not prepared to do that tonight. I'm not going to do it and neither would he if he was in my place. He'd be waiting until he got advice on what was happening and what these recommendations mean.

I think the member just wants to prolong the debate. He's not going to get anywhere because I'm not going to make any recommendations that's in that report tonight and I'm not going to make any comments on that report until we know the implications of it, until we understand what's happening. Before I can understand I have to have my staff evaluate what's in it and that's going to take a little while. I don't think the member would want me to - maybe he does, maybe he wants me to start making all kinds of statements about what I think, or what I believe, or what I feel. I can feel lots of things but that's not one of the things I feel.

MR. ORCHARD: I don't to hurt the Minister's feelings but when do you expect to take this MLA committee out to the public.

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, when the staff has completed their evaluation and their study and have done some pilot projects in certain areas, I suppose, and maybe several areas to see what the outcome would be, and then we would want to choose a time when the people out in the rural areas have time to come to meetings. We wouldn't want to go during harvest, perhaps after harvest - I'm just taking a guess, I would say maybe October, November sometime; that would be a guesstimate, but I would say as a time frame that would probably . . . I'm not sure whether staff would be able to complete their studies between now and October but maybe that sounds reasonable but maybe I'm sticking the neck of my assessor out here.

MR. ORCHARD: Then assuming you could achieve that October - November time frame it would be your intention, I take it, to bring in appropriate legislation as required in the next Session.

MR. ADAM: That would depend on what the results of the hearings are, what the government decides, that's a policy decision, of course, that government will have to address once the hearings are completed and the committee has made some recommendations. That's a policy matter that the government will have to decide on whether they should proceed or not proceed or take some of it and leave some. There may be many recommendations there that may well be accepted; maybe some may be rejected. That's some-

thing that I just can't give a definite answer on.

MR. ORCHARD: So I take it then the Minister has no specific time frame to bring in any legislation then?

MR. ADAM: Well, we don't want to be bound by this report, where the government is not bound by it. We are going to look at it very seriously and we will look at it once it's been studied thoroughly and discussed thoroughly and that people out there know what's happening, then we can make a decision on it.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: 4. (a) Salaries.
The Member for Swan River.

MR. GOURLAY: Yes, earlier I think the Minister said there was 111 municipalities that are behind on their reassessments?

MR. ADAM: Yes, plus several Northern communities as well.

MR. GOURLAY: And the total number of municipalities — I should know that but — it's 202?

MR. ADAM: Yes.

MR. GOURLAY: Then there's quite a large percentage of the rural municipalities but there's no information on them at this time with respect to information on buildings?

MR. ADAM: Yes, that's correct.

MR. GOURLAY: I don't want to go over some of the ground that we already covered, but I think it's fair to point out to the Minister from where I sit, I think that a lot of the municipal people are getting a little bit edgy in that they don't want to see this report dragged on too long and, although, you may come up with a position as a result of staff advice, I don't think you need to feel that this is carved in stone. But the municipal people have spent quite a bit of time already; they've brought forward recommendations, suggestions to the Committee and I think they're anxious to have further dialogue with the Minister and the Legislative Committee, if that's the way he wants to go.

I would strongly urge that the Minister should be contacting the Municipal Advisory Committee which represents all of the municipal interests in the province because there is, I would say, a fair amount of unrest in the municipalities with respect to the assessment inequities that we have today and the reason for establishing this review committee in the first place.

So it's fair to say, don't rush into this, but there is a certain amount of urgency to get on with this job and certainly, we in the Opposition, want to co-operate with the government to come up with the best possible assessment program that we can possibly get. So I think we can't leave it too long and I would hope that the Minister wouldn't drag this thing on unduly without, as I say, the position doesn't need to be carved in stone, but at least it's a position that can be used as a bench mark to finalize the recommendations that will be brought forth.

MR. ADAM: Yes, I really appreciate the member's comments, his offer of co-operation, I think that's a productive way to proceed. I want to inform him that I met recently with — I think it was last week — that I met with the Executive at UMM and we did discuss the report just in a preliminary way.

I informed them of how we were going to proceed and there was no serious objection on the way we are intending to proceed. So I don't know if the member has any information that I don't have, but I've met with the Executive and we didn't get any negative reaction to our proposals.

I realize there's some anxiety out there to proceed as quickly as possible and we will certainly try and do that. We don't intend to have any undue delay on the report.

MR. GOURLAY: Mr. Chairman, I keep referring to the rural part of the province and I guess that's only natural. But I believe it's fair to say too, that the city is quite anxious to get something moving on this so that the assessment recommendations can be finalized as soon as possible.

I don't think I have anything further on this part of it unless anyone else has.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Pembina.

MR. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, just one quick question to the Minister. Has the Minister received any communication about a little fracas that developed in Stanley Council about a month ago on relieving taxation of farm homes where the Reeve was involved in it?

MR. ADAM: I don't believe I have unless the member could be more specific. There has been no communication to my knowledge.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Item 4.(a) Salaries—pass; Item 4.(b) Other Expenditures—pass.

The Member for Swan River.

MR. GOURLAY: If we could just have a brief outline of what is included in the Other Expenditures.

MR. ADAM: It's mainly travelling and associated costs.

MR. GOURLAY: Is there any computerization costs in this area or is it included in the . . .

MR. ADAM: Yes, there would be. Mr. Chairman, there is \$428,000 for machine utilization and I think that's what the member is referring to.

MR. GOURLAY: \$400,000.00?

MR. ADAM: \$428,000.00.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Item 4.(b) Other Expenditures—pass.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$4,145,500 for Municipal Affairs, Municipal Assessments for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1983—pass.

Item 5. Municipal Services and Research, 5.(a) Salaries.

The Member for Swan River.

MR. GOURLAY: Is there any change with respect to the program to Local Government Districts, like to cost-sharing on road building, maintenance and the like?

MR. ADAM: No, Mr. Chairman.

MR. GOURLAY: What is the current situation with respect to the LGD of Park and I believe it's the Rural Municipality of Shell River, is it? Was there part of the LGD of Park amalgamated recently or is that still not settled?

MR. ADAM: There's no change yet. It hasn't been no change in that area.

MR. GOURLAY: Is there any discussions going on at the present time with respect to that amalgamation or is it sort of a dead issue right now?

MR. ADAM: There's no discussions, I think, taking place at the present time.

MR. GOURLAY: Is there any change in the administration of the Resident Homeowner Tax Assistance? Is that still the same as it was?

MR. ADAM: Yes.

MR. GOURLAY: I didn't catch the answer.

MR. ADAM: There's no change.

MR. GOURLAY: I don't have anything further on that.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: 5. (a) Salaries—pass. The Member for Swan River.

MR. GOURLAY: I wonder if the Minister could just briefly tell us what is included in the Other Expenditures and the reason for the increase - it's up some \$70,000.00?

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, that's mainly for computerization. I wonder, Mr. Chairman, are you asking for a complete breakdown?

MR. GOURLAY: Well, I was just wondering, there's a \$70,000 increase which seems that something significant has changed there.

MR. ADAM: The increase, Mr. Chairman, is made up of several items. The major ones would be, again, computer and machine utilization, travelling costs. It costs more to travel nowadays and there's an increase there. The rest is all minor changes. The two major ones are machine utilization and computer and travelling. Those are the three majors.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: 5. (b) Other Expenditures—pass.

RESOLVED THAT there be granted to Her Majesty

a sum not exceeding \$1,048,600 for Municipal Affairs, Municipal Services and Research for the fiscal year ending the 31st Day of March, 1983—pass.

Item 6, Municipal Planning Services, (a) Salaries. The Member for Swan River.

MR. GOURLAY: Yes, I wonder if the Minister can tell us what the present status is with respect to Planning Districts. How many are there and are there new districts being planned, or anticipated being organized in the coming year?

MR. ADAM: There are 13 at the present time - Planning Districts - which comprise 43 municipalities involved. There are three new requests to form Planning Districts at the present time.

MR. GOURLAY: I wonder if the Minister could tell us where those requests are from? Involving what municipalities?

MR. ADAM: The new ones are the LGD of Alexander and the Village of Powerview and the RM of Lac du Bonnet and the Village of Lac du Bonnet, the Town of Deloraine and the RM of Winchester.

MR. GOURLAY: There were some legal undertakings with the Morden-Stanley-Winkler Planning District and I believe recently the government provided some further assistance to some legal costs. Is this true?

MR. ADAM: Yes, there were.

MR. GOURLAY: How much did that amount to?

MR. ADAM: \$21,000, Mr. Chairman.

MR. GOURLAY: Was this a cost-sharing arrangement with the Planning District?

MR. ADAM: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. GOURLAY: What was the outcome of that case there? Could the Minister briefly tell us how the Planning District came out on that case?

MR. ADAM: Yes, there was a court case involved and an interim decision was made to development control order - I'm just getting the information now on how that went about. There was an interim development control order and it was defeated in the courts. That is why there was some extra assistance provided for the court costs, I presume.

MR. GOURLAY: Was there not a subsequent court case or legal costs involved? I'm wondering what was the result of that.

MR. ADAM: I'm advised that there was another court case and that was thrown out again.

MR. GOURLAY: Where does that sit at the present time? Is it sort of resolved or is it just sort of . . .

MR. ADAM: Yes, it has been resolved now.

MR. GOURLAY: Everthing seems to be working satisfactorily at the present time there?

MR. ADAM: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Gladstone.

MRS. CHARLOTTE OLESON (Gladstone): I'm just wondering under Salaries (a), would this include the planning personnel for instance? Has there been an increase in the planning personnel in Brandon to do with the planning services?

MR. ADAM: There has been an increase in the planning in Brandon. Yes.

MRS. OLESON: So, what does that make their total staff?

MR. ADAM: There is 11 staff there, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Pembina.

MR. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, has the Minister met with the Reeve of the RM of Stanley on the MSTW Planning District?

MR. ADAM: Yes, we have.

MR. ORCHARD: Were you able to allay some of his fears and concerns about the planning district in your eloquent and persuasive normal manner.

MR. ADAM: Yes.

MR. ORCHARD: Why is it that the Reeve still wants to take Stanley out of the planning district then, did you advise him to do that?

MR. ADAM: I don't recall all the discussions at the moment I'd have to go back and review the Minutes of the meeting. I have dealt with a number of municipalities and I don't recall all the problems that were brought to me at the time, I'd have to get briefed again on it.

MR. ORCHARD: Could the Minister make available the Minutes of the meeting he had with the Reeve and we could help him solve the problem?

MR. ADAM: They were just scribbled somewhere and they're not very, very co-ordinated Minutes.

MR. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, I can assure the Minister that wouldn't bother myself, I would make the best possible use of those Minutes in assisting him if he would make them available.

MR. ADAM: I don't think I would, there's nothing that the member would be interested in. I'm not sure whether there are Minutes anyway there was just maybe some . . .

MR. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, this does not sound like that open government we were promised.

MR. ADAM: I can make some up if he wants.

MR. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, that's part of the concern that the members in the opposition have that this Minister is making things up already and we want to attempt to help him avoid the many pitfalls of doing that. If the Minister has had any discussions at all with his Deputy he will be aware of some, shall I call them, unique circumstances with MSTW and its composite members and some of the problems perceived in real that are there and organized in that planning district. My colleague the MLA for Swan River, and the former Minister, was aware of certain court actions that accompanied the establishment of MSTW and I guess since the Minister, either cannot or will not, provide any Minutes of the meeting he had with the Reeve of Stanley, can I simply ask the Minister if he recommended to the Reeve of the R.M. of Stanley that, by all means, they should stay in the planning district, or did he indicate that they should pull out?

MR. ADAM: I think they should stay in, Mr. Chairman, I'm certainly encouraging all municipalities to try and form planning districts and I would certainly encourage them to stay.

MR. ORCHARD: Did the Minister, in the course of discussions with the Reeve of Stanley, point out to him what sort of options were available and what sort of procedures would follow should the R.M. of Stanley not be part of the MSTW planning district.

MR. ADAM: I believe we did.

MR. ORCHARD: Would it be a fair question to ask how that information was received by the Reeve?

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, I can't remember all the details of the meetings we held with them but I know that the meetings that I've had, up to this point in time, with many of the groups, including that group, were very good meetings and they received information from us and they have brought their concerns to our attention. I don't recall all the details of the situation, I'd have to look at the information again to find out what . . .

MR. ORCHARD: Would the Minister entertain applications by municipalities to form a single municipality planning district?

MR. ADAM: No, not at this time, we try to encourage them to form a district with a neighbouring local government.

MR. ORCHARD: By "not at this time" is the Minister contemplating changing that?

MR. ADAM: That's something that we may look at in the future but at this point in time, no.

MR. ORCHARD: That's all the questions I have right now, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Item 6.(a) Salaries — pass; item 6.(b) Other Expenditures —pass.

RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$2,390,800 for Municipal Affairs - Municipal Planning Services for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1983—pass.

Item No. 7. Provincial Planning, 7.(a) Salaries.
The Member for Swan River.

MR. GOURLAY: I wonder if the Minister could indicate how many applications were received for subdivisions and how many were subsequently approved during the past year.

MR. ADAM: We have received 1,347, Mr. Chairman, and there were 961 approved. There were 135 that were rejected by the council; there 19 that were rejected by the Minister and there were 7 that were rejected by the Municipal Board.

MR. GOURLAY: I think that's it for now.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, could the Minister indicate what the role will be of the Inter-Departmental Planning Board and the Provincial Land Use Committee of Cabinet as the province relates to the review of the Greater Winnipeg Development Plan and Plan Winnipeg. I would understand that plan would still go through this process of the Inter-Departmental Planning Board and the Provincial Land Use of Cabinet, it wouldn't be the function of the new Urban Affairs Department to look after that, would it?

MR. ADAM: The IPB would report to the UACC and then it would go to Cabinet.

MR. MERCIER: Has that process started now?

MR. ADAM: Yes.

MR. MERCIER: How long does the Minister estimate that process to take before the province will take a position?

MR. ADAM: We have taken a position all along, I'm advised by staff.

MR. MERCIER: Has the Minister written to the city on that issue?

MR. ADAM: We have written to the city, yes.

MR. MERCIER: Would the Minister undertake to provide me with a copy of that correspondence?

MR. ADAM: Yes.

MR. MERCIER: Thank you very much.

MR. ADAM: You're welcome.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Item 7.(a) Salaries.
The Member for Pembina.

MR. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, is this the appropriate place to discuss the Provincial Land Use Committee?

MR. ADAM: The Minister of Agriculture is the Chairman of that Committee.

MR. ORCHARD: Are you a member of that Committee, Mr. Minister?

MR. ADAM: Yes.

MR. ORCHARD: I take it, from reading the Preamble under Provincial Planning, that the Provincial Land Use Committee is part of this Minister's funding responsibilities?

MR. ADAM: Yes, part of my responsibility is being a member of the PLUC Committee.

MR. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, I suspect the PLUC Committee is wrestling with the sale of Crown land policy; would that be a fair assumption?

MR. ADAM: We have discussed it, Mr. Chairman, but we haven't dealt with it.

MR. ORCHARD: When do you expect to deal with it, Mr. Chairman?

MR. ADAM: We will be dealing with it in about two weeks, as soon as it comes up.

MR. ORCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Has the Minister had an opportunity to review the very thorough screening process that all applications for sale of Crown lands went through, the guidelines, the policy framework, that the Provincial Land Use Committee was given to deal with the whole issue of sale of Crown lands. Has the Minister had an opportunity to review that process and the way it was operating and the parameters under which it was operating under our administration?

MR. ADAM: We have reviewed it, yes. It's the responsibility of the Department of Natural Resources.

MR. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, that's only partially correct because the Provincial Land Use Committee did have all of the workings of recommending for sale and declining for sale and referring to the Cabinet Committee, the Provincial Land Use Committee, of sales of Crown land and it was through the Provincial Land Use Committee that the recommendations were collated between the various departments as to whether a given piece of Crown land should or should not be sold for agricultural purposes. That process I happen to have had some responsibility for, as Chairman of the PLUC Committee for a couple of years, and in my estimation, and I'm not trying to take credit for anything I did because it was the committee members that were of great assistance in developing that framework, but I am of the opinion that we had every potential pitfall covered in the review process and in the recommendation process and the guidelines that the Provincial Land Use Committee had to deal with in assessing the saleability of Crown land. I would merely ask the Minister if he, in reviewing that framework, that set of policies, that operation, is he satisfied that the process was a good one?

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, the Crown lands question is under study at the present time and it will be addressed very, very shortly. I can inform the honourable member that some of the problems that did come up on the previous policy had to do with the sale of LGD lands; that there were some problems with the policy change last October, I believe.

MR. ORCHARD: Could the Minister be a little more specific on that one?

MR. ADAM: Yes, the LGD lands, the policy was changed so that the unencumbered LGD lands would be tendered rather than sold at appraised value and, apparently has created some problems for some of the Local Government Districts.

MR. ORCHARD: Okay, that's one area but that isn't the Crown lands sales policy that I'm talking about here. Although it's under review, and the Minister indicates he's about to make a decision or it's about to go to PLUC Committee in a couple of weeks time, the Minister must have reviewed the guidelines, is he satisfied that those guidelines were good enough to undertake Crown land sales? Were there any glaring errors, in his opinion, in the guidelines that were developed over the last couple or three years?

MR. ADAM: We are going to study that policy that had been undertaken by the previous administration. We're reviewing that and at this point in time I can't advise the member whether there's going to be any changes. We have held in abeyance any new applications until the review is completed but that doesn't necessarily mean that Crown lands won't be sold in the future. We are reviewing the policy, Mr. Chairman, to see if there were any inequities in the program, to review the entire question of Crown lands.

MR. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, there are no new applications being received. There were a number of applications that were in the process. Have any of those applications been furthered since the 17th of November, and any parcels of land recommended for sale of that group in which the applications were already in the mill and coming to the Minister and to the PLUC Committee for approval to sell, have any of those been approved for sale since November 17th, of the old applications prior to November 17th?

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, if I understand correctly, the member said that any application that was received after the 17th?

MR. ORCHARD: The Minister indicated that there have been no new applications received because, boom, you've shut 'em down.

MR. ADAM: No.

MR. ORCHARD: Okay, then the Minister can correct that because I think that's what he said.

MR. ADAM: No, there were applications received but, as of December 9th, when the decision was made to hold processing any further applications, all applica-

tions prior to that which were in the mill were to be processed, is my understanding. But any new applications after December 9 would be held in abeyance until the review was completed.

MR. ORCHARD: Of the applications that were received up to December 9, have any of those applications received a recommendation for sale and have those lands been sold?

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, all the applications that had been received prior to December 9 are being processed and I don't know at what stage they are, there are different stages. There may be some that would be coming to PLUC, as the member mentioned awhile ago, those that have been rejected by departments for one reason or another. Some of those may be coming to PLUC but all those applications that had been in the process, they are still proceeding but they may be at various levels in the process of transfer or whatever.

MR. ORCHARD: Then, do I take it from the Minister's answer, that since December 9 there has not been any Crown lands sold on applications that were made prior to December 9, some as long ago as July, 1981.

MR. ADAM: No, that is not correct. All those applications that were received prior to December 9 are being proceeded with.

MR. ORCHARD: If the Minister doesn't have it tonight would he provide me with information as to parcels of land, Crown lands that have been sold since December 9 on applications we received prior to December 9.

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, there would be Orders-in-Councils. We deal with them every week, there are some going through. That information is public and all the member has to do is go down to wherever the records are kept.

But, Mr. Chairman, just on a point of order, we are dealing with the Department of Natural Resources here in dealing with this question. But if the member wants to talk about the Provincial Land Use Committee which deals with those Crown lands that have been rejected by one of the departments, that's an issue that I can deal as a member of the PLUC Committee, but when we get into a wide-ranging discussion of how many lands have been processed, how many parcels and so on, well you're really dealing with the Department of Natural Resources then.

MR. ORCHARD: Could the Minister then provide me with a breakdown — I know the PLUC Committee always had the chart set up of total applications, number rejected, number approved, number requiring Ministerial decision at the PLUC Committee level — could the Minister provide me with the latest status quo on those applications received prior to December 9?

MR. ADAM: Yes. I believe then, Mr. Chairman, that we would be able to provide the member with that up until December 9.

MR. ORCHARD: That won't do because I've seen the one up to December 9. I would like to see the latest one which deals with applications received up until December 9. I hope the Minister isn't shutting me off at December 9.

MR. ADAM: No, no. There will be some lands that probably have been processed after December 9, that's what the member means. That's correct, that's okay.

MR. ORCHARD: Very good, then. One final question, does the Minister support the sale of agricultural Crown land to leaseholders?

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, we're looking at that. There could be some merit and we'll be reviewing that and making a decision within two or three weeks, I presume.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. ROLAND PENNER (FortRouge): Yes, this was just in reference to the Honourable Member for Pembina's previous question. The Minister is right. These matters come up under Natural Resources.

With respect to the sale of Crown land, every week there is 3, 4, 5, or 6 of them and they go through by way of O.C. and they're a matter of public record.

MR. GOURLAY: The Minister made reference to policy problems with respect to LGD lands. We passed that area where we should have discussed that but I wonder if the Minister would mind just relating whether or not he plans on changing those policy recommendations with respect to LGD lands or has he changed the policy that was brought in, I think, September, October of 1981.

MR. ADAM: We are reviewing that at the present time.

MR. GOURLAY: No changes have been made to date, then?

MR. ADAM: No, the problems are just being brought to our attention now and we're taking a look at it.

MR. GOURLAY: What are the main problems that have been brought to your attention, Mr. Minister? You mentioned one area. Are there other areas?

MR. ADAM: One of the complaints that have been brought to our attention about the policy was the interest rates; that the municipalities would have to charge 1 percent above prime which in some areas has stopped all sale of LGD land.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Item 7. (a) Salaries—pass; 7. (b) Other Expenditures—pass.

RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$298,300 for Municipal Affairs, Provincial Planning for the fiscal year ending the 31 day of March, 1983—pass.

Item 8. Canada-Manitoba Northern Development Agreement. There is no particular expenditures in

here. I would like to ask the direction of the Committee in dealing with this. This might be an opportunity for some comments if they wish, Mr. Minister.

Mr. Minister, do you want to make some comments on that?

MR. ADAM: The information that we have here, Mr. Chairman, is that Northern Planning is included as Canada-Manitoba Northern Development Agreement. No funds are shown since the Northland Program is all included in the Canada-Manitoba Enabling Vote, page 114, and the total Northern Planning Branch is \$201,900, that's all we have on that. It will be shown in the Enabling Vote, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Are there any further comments on Item 8? Okay, let's go then to the Minister's Salary. Item 1.(a)—pass.

The Member for Swan River.

MR. GOURLAY: I just have a brief comment to make. Earlier we discussed the Main Street Manitoba Program and the Minister has assured us that this will be approved through Cabinet next week and that he will be announcing further information in the House when that is cleared through Cabinet. I would just like to say that we're looking forward to hearing further details on that program. I think that we on this side agree with the concept, and I would think that there'll be a number of applications received from various parts of the province to take advantage of that Main Street Program.

Also, with respect to the Assessment Review Committee's recommendations, I think we had a fairly good discussion with respect to that report. I would again urge the Minister to have some consultation with the Minister of Urban Affairs and the Municipal Advisory Committee with respect to proceeding with the recommendations, and trying to get the assessment recommendations resolved as quickly as possible but, not without a good consultation and dialogue with the municipal people.

MR. ADAM: Well, Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the Member for Swan River who is the critic for Municipal Affairs for his co-operation. I want to also thank my staff for the support that they have given me. They have been very helpful, I'm sure as they are to most Ministers. We will certainly try and proceed as soon as possible with the recommendations and deal with them at least and also the Main Street Program will be dealt with as soon as possible.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Item 1 (a) Minister's Salary—pass.

Resolution 94. RESOLVED THAT there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$2,475,100 for Municipal Affairs, General Administration for the fiscal year ending the 31st Day of March 1983—pass.

That completes the Estimates for the Department of Municipal Affairs.

Committee rise

SUPPLY — EDUCATION

MR. CHAIRMAN, Jerry T. Storie (Flin Flon): This

Committee will come to order. We are continuing with the Education Estimates. Item 1. Departmental Administrative Support Services, specifically, Item 1.(e)(1) Salaries.

The Honourable Member for Tuxedo.

MR. GARY FILMON (Tuxedo): Mr. Chairman, I think when we left off I was just asking the Minister about where we ought to cover a number of topics. She indicated that it should be later down the road somewhere but I don't know if she gave me a response as to just where.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

HON. MAUREEN HEMPHILL (Logan): Mr. Chairman, since there isn't any specific section to cover those points, I suggest that the Member for Tuxedo cover them wherever he thinks it's most appropriate.

MR. FILMON: However often he thinks is appropriate? Mr. Chairman, with respect to Teacher Certification, I wonder if the Minister could indicate the number of teachers employed, their classifications and average salaries in the province.

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, the information that the member is requesting we're quite happy to provide. It's fairly extensive and we will have to provide that for him. Do you want a summary of the numbers of teachers under the different classifications, sort of a general summary of teachers and their classifications?

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1.(e)(1)—pass.

The Member for Tuxedo.

MR. FILMON: Could the Minister indicate, Mr. Chairman, what the numbers of teachers are in training at the various institutions that have teacher education programs in the province and perhaps the number that are expected to graduate this year?

HON. MAUREEN HEMPHILL (Logan): Mr. Chairman, the number of teachers being trained in the different institutions, I'll read the following: University of Manitoba, 351; Winnipeg, 110; St. Boniface, 28; Brandon, regular and music, 101; Brandon, the PENT Program, 3; Brandon, BUNTEP, 19; Red River Community College, Vocational Industrial, 10; Red River Community College, Industrial Arts, 18; Red River Community College, Business Education, 12, for a total of 652.

MR. FILMON: How many are expected to be graduating this year, Mr. Chairman, or was that the numbers? That was the number expected to graduate, I see. So, since many of these programs are several years in duration the enrolment is obviously considerably higher. The Minister can indicate if there is a figure on total enrolment without breaking it down amongst institutions. I wonder if the Minister can indicate whether there is a reasonable expectation that there will be jobs for these 652 who are graduating this year.

MRS. HEMPHILL: We have the figures for last year,

Mr. Chairman; 72 percent of them were employed from those who graduated last year.

MR. FILMON: Employed in Manitoba or 72 percent were employed, in total, in teaching?

MRS. HEMPHILL: 72 percent were employed in teaching. Some left the province and some would have gone into employment in other areas, not directly into teaching; 72 percent is the number that were employed directly in their graduate positions.

MR. FILMON: Can the Minister indicate whether or not there is a reasonable expectation that this year's graduates will all be employed or what percentage. The 72 percent, was there a comparable number? Was last year's number 650 approximately or were there more trained last year or less?

MRS. HEMPHILL: The number of graduates have been fairly stable in the last few years. The expectations are that the employment opportunities will be as good as they were last year for this year's graduates. We don't have the exact figures.

MR. FILMON: In view of the fact that there appear to be because of declining enrolments, fewer total numbers of teachers are going to be employed certainly from some of the newspaper accounts of boards forming their budgets this coming year. There appear to be slight declines in various different divisions. Does the Minister then expect that more of them will be going outside the province to seek employment?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, I do not expect at this point that more will be going outside, more will be leaving the province to find employment. The declining enrolment is still a factor but the previous two years, '78, '79, '80 were the worst years, were the peak years of the decline. It is not as bad this year; it is beginning to stabilize. We have, I believe done a better job of identifying or we are improving our ability perhaps might be a better way to say it, our ability to indicate where the needs are. While the overall needs for teachers may be held in a stable position because of the student population, there are certain categories and certain programs and courses where the needs are very high. We are not yet in all cases even able to meet our own requirements in this province, so that perhaps larger numbers of them are being appropriately counselled and guided into these areas such as the Special Need category.

MR. FILMON: I wonder if the Minister could indicate what are the Special Needs categories where there are opportunities and positions that are being left unfilled, then.

MRS. HEMPHILL: Probably the greatest difficulty that we would be having now is, it's not unlike many other fields or professional areas where they have difficulty getting highly skilled, specialized people in the more rural and remote areas where they still have children who need those services but they do not have people in their community or are not able to attract

people to those positions. That would be one of the areas, I think, that would be obvious.

I think it's fair to say too, that when you bring in a program or expand a program such as was done by the previous government, where you expanded considerably in a short period of time in that one year, it does take awhile for the system to catch up. In other words, just because you decide to do something and approve a program doesn't mean that the people and the programs are there overnight. It takes time to identify them; to hire them; to develop the programs in the first place in the school divisions. I think that school divisions are moving in that direction and developing the programs and hiring the people as they have them in place.

MR. FILMON: What's the nature of these programs that the Minister is referring to?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Perhaps one way of identifying the programs would be to talk about the personnel that are providing the programs.

In the Special Needs area we have clinicians; special needs co-ordinators; we have psychologists; we have social workers. These are now people where the school division can develop programs for their children, apply and get support for that personnel for those special people.

MR. FILMON: So we are referring specifically there to children with special needs, whether they be learning disabilities or so on. I was wondering, more particularly, about having qualified staff perhaps to teach in areas such as vocational industrial education and that sort of thing; whether that is an area of greater or lesser need than general specialists; whether or not there are greater or lesser needs for people to teach in immersion programs, whether they be French, German, Ukrainian, all of which are available now throughout various divisions and so on? I wasn't only referring to the Learning Disabled or Special Needs Children.

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, we do have increasing needs in a number of areas and some of the ones were the ones the Member for Tuxedo identified. There is an increasing need in the vocational training programs and we have and are increasing the numbers of people that are being taken into those programs who will be trained.

Another example, I suppose, would be the child care services where we know there is going to be an expansion in that program and we have doubled the capacity of Red River Community College in this budget year to begin to meet that particular increase need, recognizing that it will not all be done in this budget year and that there will have to be further expansion again.

One of the studies that the research branch undertook, I think it was last year, that I found quite interesting, was a study on teacher placement, Mr. Chairman. And while I don't have the exact results here, in general, I can say that they identified one of our problems as not necessarily having the numbers of teachers or the kinds of teachers that we needed, but the inappropriate or, if I might use, the allocation of those

personnel resources in the schools. One of the areas that was clearly identified was the ability to teach in the core or the immersion programs where there were teachers who had academic background and training to handle some programs, but who had been time-tabled or booked into other courses.

So, perhaps where we have deficiencies one of the things we will have to look at more seriously is not just retraining, or improving or increasing the training, but the redeployment or use of the teaching staff that we have presently.

MR. FILMON: I think that not only in teaching but in any form of education there is a difficulty in matching student choices with the needs that are out there in the employment field for which they are training and that has not only to do with education but it has to do with virtually every trade, occupation, career that there is training available for in the various institutions throughout our province and any other province. I think that has always been a problem. I think over the years as a result of guidance and counseling and career information opportunities that have been improved and enhanced with the school system, that we started more to marry the needs with the opportunities and the people coming in one end, coming closer to matching the people required at the other end.

What I'm wondering is, what specifically the Minister feels could be done to improve that even more so if she has identified, as she has for me, that there are still areas in which the needs exceed the numbers who are graduating, whereas there appear to be 28 percent of the graduates who are not finding employment in the field for which they're trained, i.e. teaching. So what does she feel can be done to improve that situation?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, I think this is a very important question and one that doesn't have just one simple answer but that we're going to have to attack from a number of different ways. We have recognized it and, I think, some work has been done before and we will be continuing it.

Certainly in the area of counseling for students and the career development programs, I think there has been a lot of work done in the past. We have done a special two-day career symposium where students by the hundreds were brought in from all over the province. One of the things we must do is make them aware of the expanding fields, new jobs, new technologies and new opportunities so they're not thinking that everybody is going to grow up to be a nurse or a doctor or the jobs in the field that everybody knows about.

It's also important I think, that we work closely with the Deans and people in the universities and in the colleges, that there be a continuing examination of the areas in the fields that are declining and where there isn't a high job requirement; as much information as we can get about the fields of the future; the places where there is most likely to be job opportunities and security; and to do the best job that we can do, if not to push students, but to inform them, give them as much information as possible so that they're making good choices.

MR. FILMON: Although I was giving an example of all

occupations I'm more particularly concerned under these Estimates that we are training sufficient numbers of teachers which obviously we are but perhaps not in the right field. So to avoid the disappointment, discouragement, that occurs when considerable numbers of people who have trained, in some cases, 2, 3, 4 years beyond general, in some cases, with second degree and other things, find that there isn't employment, to try and avoid that and I know it's not possible to avoid it entirely. I guess I just want some assurance that this is an ongoing concern and priority of the department, to better marry the input-output into the teaching profession.

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, I mentioned that there was close liaison and discussion between the Department of Education, faculties and school divisions to improve our information distribution to students in this way.

One of the improvements has been that faculties survey school divisions and they determine, they ask them what their needs are going to be and it gives them some idea of where the major requirements are and that affects the numbers that they take in to the different courses and different programs. So to that extent, they are attempting to meet the needs in the field.

MR. FILMON: We're aware of many more teachers leaving the profession, not just to enter political life as some of our colleagues in the Chamber have in recent years, but to change professions or careers in mid-stream and go into a variety of different opportunities. We hear a lot of talk about teacher burnout at young ages — at least young from my perspective — and I'm just wondering if this is causing concerns with respect to being able to have sufficient numbers of good, well qualified teachers attracted to the profession for the future and whether or not this is part of the overall Manpower planning, person-power planning, that we have undergoing in the education field as well.

MRS. HEMPHILL: The Member for Tuxedo has identified an area that is of great concern to everybody and that I have discussed at considerable length, both with the Teachers' Society, the trustees and with the many teacher groups that I have spoken to in the last five months.

Unfortunately, the burnout is not an indication of lack of effort. It's an indication, often, of a tremendous amount of effort by tremendously good people and what is happening is that we are often losing some of the most dedicated, hardest working teachers in the profession. The reasons, we know. I'm not sure the solutions are as clear but we have begun to talk about them which I think is, at least, a step in the right direction.

One of the big reasons that I find, when I say it the teachers tell me that I am right, is not just the amount of work they're doing, not just the tremendous increased pressures in their job and the tremendously increasing demands, because now teachers are being asked, not just to teach, but they're being asked to be parents, they're being asked to be social workers, they're being asked to do and fill many of the holes that are caused by the unstable society that we have

today, but they are not getting much credit and recognition for the work that they are doing. In other words, they feel that they are under a great deal of pressure, stress and demands to continue doing their old job, which is teaching kids basics, reading and writing and arithmetic, to continue taking on all these new jobs, this tremendously expanding role and pressures and with very little recognition, that they're doing it well.

Sometimes I think the hardest thing is not hard work and pressure but lack of credit and recognition for it, so I have begun to speak out publicly about the stress and pressures on teachers, about the increased demands, and being very supportive to them for the job that they are doing.

We also are going to have to talk to them and look at the school system and decide what we can reasonably expect our teachers to do and to continue doing, to fill these holes. So hopefully, if we raise the issue publicly and we will begin to recognize the work that is being done by the teachers of the province and the pressure and strains that they are under and do whatever we can to release those pressures so that we're not losing the valuable resource that we have spent so much time creating.

MR. FILMON: Some of the teachers with whom I speak and of whom I've heard, I think are also leaving for lack of challenge or interest. Is there something the Minister feels pertains to the system that fails to keep them motivated, challenged, interested in carrying on with their profession, looking to change for other careers, more for goal orientation and the challenges that they provide?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Yes, I do think that is a problem and it's one that I usually mention when I'm talking about the problem, except I'm trying to not expand my answers to take in everything that I've ever thought of about the different issues.

I do not think that teachers have a lot of opportunity to be creative or to do things in their school classrooms to develop and design them. I think some of the programs that we will be looking at and some of the ways we will be looking at doing them, will be to involve teachers more in the field with what is going to happen and with what is happening in the classroom. I'm thinking in a number of ways, particularly of curriculum development where — we'll get into this later — we do a very good job of planning the curriculum and developing it. I think we fall down when it comes to implementation in the field and with working and having the teachers help design and help develop it. I think if they could initiate and create and develop perhaps a little bit more, that we all need to expand and change what we do to keep our interests up and teachers aren't any different. So, I think we do have to look for ways to allow them and give them those opportunities so we don't both exhaust them and bore them. We don't want to do either one.

MR. FILMON: I guess that the Minister will be on the horns of a dilemma because I thought I heard some comments either from her or from others at the Manitoba Teachers' Society Annual Meeting about too many changes and too rapid changes and the frustra-

tions of trying to implement new curricula and so on. So, I guess the Minister will have to weigh the benefits and the consequences of the challenges that she and I'm sure many, myself included, would like to see as part of the teaching profession along with the resistance to change that's natural in people in all professions and all fields and that sometimes manifests itself in frustrations that they have in dealing with the changes.

The Minister — and I should have referred to this earlier — said that one of the areas of growing need in instruction was in child care, at least I think that was the reference she made. I wondered if she was referring to the training of instructors for early childhood education or day-care workers or if this is a different initiative.

MRS. HEMPHILL: I was referring to the expansion in the field of day care. Perhaps we could get into discussions of that program under the Community Colleges.

MR. FILMON: I wonder if the Minister could indicate whether she believes that the Teacher Certification function as part of her department is properly vested in the Department of Education and if this should be a continuing responsibility of the Department of Education.

MRS. HEMPHILL: The structure in the system that we have in place in Manitoba presently is one that is used across Canada and, in fact, in North America. The Departments of Education do have the responsibility for Teacher Certification.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, does that mean that she disagrees with the position that I believe is put forward by the Manitoba Teachers' Society that the teachers under a professional act should be responsible for certification rather than the Department of Education?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, it's my understanding that the Teachers' Society is talking more about being involved in the classification area and not the certification; that would still remain the function with the Department of Education and that they would become involved; this is their wish to become involved in the classification of teachers.

MR. FILMON: But the certification aspect, the Minister believes, should continue to be the prerogative of the Department of Education?

MRS. HEMPHILL: The question of the role and function of the certification branch is not something that I have either looked at or given tremendous consideration to. So, I suppose I can say that at this point, the roles of the departments as they exist presently will continue to exist that way until we have time to review whether we think that is a reasonable role and function for them.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, is the Minister then saying that she doesn't necessarily believe that certification should be the prerogative of the

Department of Education?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, I think that what I am saying is that I am happy with it at the present time and unless I review it and consider it and find some reason to not be as happy with it as I am now, there will be no change.

MR. FILMON: Has the Minister had an opportunity to — since I think we maybe touched on some aspects of the issue in the last few minutes — has the Minister had an opportunity to review the 20-20 proposal of the Manitoba Teachers' Society and is she in a position to give us any of her opinions on it at the moment?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, I have not been in a position to review that issue. I have meetings set up with the Teachers' Society, I think within about two weeks, and the purpose of the meeting is to review the resolutions that were passed at their convention and I understand that will be one of them that they will be presenting to me.

MR. FILMON: Has the Minister had an opportunity to discuss either with the MTS or with her department the proposal for a teachers' professional bill which I believe is in existence and has been discussed by the Teachers' Society in the past and I believe is still one of their objectives?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, I have presently two meetings scheduled with the Teachers' Society. The one is to review resolutions and I believe that one of the two or three items on the agenda for the June meeting is the professional bill. I have not yet had a chance to discuss that with them.

MR. FILMON: Since the Minister, I believe, has maintained a close liaison in the past with the Manitoba Teachers' Society and has been in close communication, does she have any views on the advisability of a teacher's professional bill for the province?

MRS. HEMPHILL: I must say, Mr. Chairman, that in the course of learning a very complicated job one of the things I have found is that it is very important to not prejudice issues and to listen to the people that are presenting them to you. In other words I am waiting to hear, not just the recommendation but the rationale, the reasons, the supporting documentation and information that they will present to me when we discuss this issue before making a judgment.

MR. FILMON: Will the Minister also consult closely with parents, administrators and elected officials at the school board level prior to making her judgments on various things including the resolutions of the Teachers' Society and the proposed teacher's professional bill?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, I believe one of the things I have been doing since I took office is making myself available at quite considerable lengths to all groups, organizations and people to discuss any number of issues or problems that they want to discuss. It is the result of hearing from and talking to the

wide variety of groups and people that I believe I've been able to identify and understand some of the problems, concerns and issues that are facing us right now.

To the degree that I can, we have discussed having interorganizational agendas on topics that are of common concern to all of them and going as far as we can to make decisions or to deal with issues together in trying to eliminate the numbers of things where people have to take conflict or opposite positions. So when we have been dealing with issues to date that have an effect or a position from a number of organizations, I meet and discuss the issue with all of them and if I can, I bring them together to discuss the issues.

MR. FILMON: I think, Mr. Chairman, that it would be difficult to include noninvolved or nonbiased, shall we say, parents as well as other members of the general community with respect to these issues. I think it would be important for the Minister in discussing things of the nature of the proposal to limit class sizes to 20 students and limit the hours of instruction for teachers to 20 per week or the various pros and cons of a professional bill for the teachers.

There's no question that however much we might admire and hope to support teachers, they do have a special interest in various proposals that they're bringing forward just as any special interest group does. The responses which may come to their proposals may not only come from organized groups such as MAST or the school principal's group or others, they may well come from the general public and parents who have a very grave stake in the interest of the future education of their children. I think it's as important to listen to these unorganized groups who will not necessarily appear in the interorganizational get-togethers that the Minister has, as to all of the others.

MRS. HEMPHILL: I don't think there is a question there but I will respond to the thought. I must say that I'm pleased to hear the ideas of the Member for Tuxedo because he is supporting what I have been saying very clearly, I believe, since I took office and talking about and that is the importance of involving parents and the public and the community in things that affect their children and their school. I have been saying that all along that they are one of the partners, I suppose is a way to describe it, and that how they feel and what they believe is as important as what we believe in our professional or elected capacities.

MR. FILMON: In Item (e), Mr. Chairman, after Teacher Certification, is noted Records. I wonder could the Minister indicate what Records are kept on either teachers or students with respect to the public school system.

MRS. HEMPHILL: We maintain academic records for grade 10 to 12 students. We issue transcripts for those students. We maintain the teacher certification records. We maintain all types of information on teachers data on teachers, academic qualifications, classifications, years of experience.

MR. FILMON: What is the policy with respect to the

confidentiality of these records, Mr. Chairman?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, the policy related to the question of access that the member has raised is that the information on student records is considered confidential but it is accessible to students and parents. It is accessible to teachers. If it is an individual it is privileged but on aggregate it is all right. In other words, teachers could have access to aggregate information for the purpose of research, or could not have access to an individual student's records.

MR. FILMON: An individual student's records are only accessible by the student himself or herself or the student's parents. Is that what the Minister is saying?

MRS. HEMPHILL: That is correct, or the parents.

MR. FILMON: Does that change if the student is an adult?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Yes, if the student is 18 it is restricted to the student.

MR. FILMON: With respect to the teachers' records, to whom are they accessible, or by whom are they accessible?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, those records are available to the teacher himself or herself only.

MR. FILMON: Why are they kept by the department then, Mr. Chairman? If they're only for the purpose of the teacher, that teacher could keep them themselves. Obviously, the department must need them for some purpose.

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, once again, records on the individual are totally confidential, but the aggregate information will sometimes be used for research purposes by different branches of the department and some of the information that is kept, which is the classification of teachers, has an affect on salary and the amount of money that we expect will be required. One of the examples where the material was used is in the study to develop teacher needs where we use the aggregate information in the study.

MR. FILMON: If an individual school board wished to determine the qualifications or the certification status of a certain individual who it was thinking of hiring, are the records not available on the consent of the teacher applying for a position?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, it's my understanding that they're always available with the consent of the teacher.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, what records are required by the department to be kept by schools with respect to either teachers or students?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, some of the information that would be required by school divisions on teachers would be their academic qualifications, their

classification and verification of their teaching experience.

MR. FILMON: And on students?

MRS. HEMPHILL: The information that would be required for students would be the courses they had completed, the standing in those courses, their marks, credits that they had obtained.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, with respect to the third part of Item (e), Education Data, what services are provided under that general topic and to whom?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, that information is the information that I gave before on what was collected, the data that was collected regarding teachers. It is a teacher information system and it gives data about teachers related to classification, academic skills and experience.

MR. FILMON: So the data services are just the collection and utilization of that information and it's all tied into the Teacher Certification and Records, there's nothing else in the Education Data?

MRS. HEMPHILL: No.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Item 1.(e)(1)—pass; Item 1.(e)(2) Other Expenditures—pass; (e)—pass; 1.(f) Management Information Services, 1.(f)(1) Salaries. The Member for Tuxedo.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, I think that this is a new branch, if I'm not mistaken, so I'd like to know how many people are involved and what is its function?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, the Member for Tuxedo is quite correct when he suggests that this is a new branch. It was created though from what existed in the department. It is a consolidation of both staff and equipment and resources to better provide computer data information to the Department of Education and to the Community Colleges. It's my understanding that this consolidation and movement of people and resources took place last year and we are showing it in this budget year as a new department.

MR. FILMON: Does it represent an addition of staff to the overall complement or is it just a reallocation and transfer of staff that were existent and what are its prime functions; the computer data information that it's providing, to whom and for what purpose?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, it does not include any additional staff man years. It was all done within the existing personnel of the Department of Education. It provides a number of services. One of them is it acts as a service unit for the whole department. Prior to this reorganization, I think there were data information systems in 12 budgets, or in 12 different areas, so that it definitely is providing more co-ordinated, consolidated information to the department. It provides an academic service to the Community College. There is a linkage with the computer training course that is at the Red River Community College. One of

the increases in the budget is recognizing the tremendous increase of 62.2 percent in students receiving computer services from the Management Information Service that they have put in 14 additional terminals. That is one of the major parts of the program. It provides data processing service for the administration, for the Department of Education Administrative Branch. It provides for collection and retrieval of information, a much more efficient collection and retrieval of information within the department and between the Department of Education and the Red River Community College.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, Conrad Santos (Burrows): The Member for Tuxedo.

MR. FILMON: What are the 14 additional terminals being used for and where are they located?

MRS. HEMPHILL: They are for the Computer Analysis Course at Red River Community College and that's where they are located. That is the course that I suggested had such a tremendous increase in the numbers of students. Yes, it was a 29-percent increase in 1981 and it is up to 1,103 students, a 62-percent increase this year.

MR. FILMON: I guess I'm a little confused as to why it would be part of the Central Administrative Budget when it's really being used for training purposes at the Community College or, at least, that's what I'm interpreting the Minister is saying.

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, it's my understanding that we are providing both services — I suppose this is a support service — to the Community College, where we're providing the service to the Department of Education. With the same people and the same equipment we are providing services to the college for their expanded computer program.

MR. FILMON: To whom are these people responsible, to the Community College Instructional Program or are they responsible to the department?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, my understanding is that we are providing this service in the name of efficiency, perhaps, that we are already providing the administrative service to the college and we are providing the service within the Department of Education. We are using the same people to provide the computer programming equipment to the students at Red River Community College. That is the way that it is presently set up.

MR. FILMON: When is the equipment utilized to provide the administrative services for the department and for the administrative functions of the Community College, during what hours of the day?

MRS. HEMPHILL: The present set-up is that the students are using it during the day and the administration is using it at night.

MR. FILMON: Is the administration of the community colleges or is that the administration of the Depart-

ment of Education?

MRS. HEMPHILL: The community colleges.

MR. FILMON: When does the administration of the Department of Education use it?

MRS. HEMPHILL: While the services are being delivered from the Department of Education, they are not using all of the same equipment. There is a separation, both in terms of facility and equipment for the services that are being provided, and the department's equipment is separate from that which is being used for the college.

MR. FILMON: Is the department's equipment also being used by the students during the daytime?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Yes.

MR. FILMON: So it's just the community colleges administration's equipment that is being used during the evenings and by the students in the daytime.

MRS. HEMPHILL: Yes.

MR. FILMON: Then why isn't the equipment a part of the community college rather a part of the Management Information Services of the Department of Education?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, I believe when they were setting up the program, they felt there would be benefits in consolidating the equipment and the services, and in sharing the resources that were needed by both the college and the Department of Education. In other words, the benefits came from not just reorganizing, coordinating and consolidating within the department, but sharing and meeting the requirements of both the college and the Department of Education in the organization and service that they established.

MR. FILMON: In view of the fact that students are utilizing the equipment, are there sufficient controls on the confidentiality of the information that is being processed for the department?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, that is a concern or a factor that was already recognized and we have established adequate controls.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, perhaps we can pass (f)(1)?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: 1. (f)(1)—pass.
1. (f)(2).

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister could indicate what that amount of almost \$1.2 million is for.

MRS. HEMPHILL: I can give the member opposite, that is the Other Expenditures. Would you like me to list the Other Expenditures? I can, I will hit the highlights.

Your Analyst Course is \$176,000; the High School Network is \$334,000; Manitoba Data Services, \$121,000; Film Booking, \$68,200; University of Manitoba, \$48,000; Paper Supply, \$96,000; Computer-related Equipment, Terminals, Lines and Data Preparation, Data 100, \$140,000; excuse me, the Data Preparation is \$106,000 and separate from the others that I just mentioned.

MR. FILMON: The Minister's reference to computer-related equipment, is that for purchase of equipment or cost of time purchase, time rental, whatever?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, that is essentially the cost of leasing equipment.

MR. FILMON: What is the amount of \$48,000 to the University of Manitoba for?

MRS. HEMPHILL: We are on a post-secondary network at the University of Manitoba. We do the administrative processing for the college that we described before through the University of Manitoba.

MR. FILMON: If you have the equipment and the terminals at the college, how do you do it through the University of Manitoba?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, we are a member of a post-secondary network and as such we share equipment and facilities and the terminals from the Department of Education are directly connected to the University of Manitoba.

MR. FILMON: So, is the Minister saying the central processing unit is at the U of M and the terminals are at the college?

MRS. HEMPHILL: For administrative purposes, yes; for students, no.

MR. FILMON: What was the amount of \$68,200 for Film Booking? What does that entail?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, it's an automated film booking system where the speakers book films that they require or want for their classrooms.

MR. FILMON: What speakers, Mr. Chairman, are we speaking about? All the teachers in the Province of Manitoba having access to this or colleges division or the universities?

MRS. HEMPHILL: That service's materials are available to the teachers in the school system.

MR. FILMON: What was the amount, Mr. Chairman, can the Minister amplify on the amount that she said was for the Computer Analyst Course?

MRS. HEMPHILL: \$176,000.00. That amount of money, Mr. Chairman, is mainly the amount of money that is required for leasing the Hewlett-Packard computer which gives us 30 terminals that are available for students.

MR. FILMON: Well again, Mr. Chairman, without belabouring the point, I'd have to wonder why it shows up in this budget instead of in the corresponding budget at the Community College. I realize it has to be spent, it just doesn't seem to me to be appropriate in this section. However, we'll leave it at that and say (f)(2)—pass.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: (f)(2)—pass. That completes the item under 1. (f). Now we go to 2. under Research; (a) Salaries.

The Honourable Member for Tuxedo.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister can indicate how many personnel are in the research section and whether there's been an increase or a decrease.

MR. CHAIRMAN, Jerry T. Storie (Flin Flon): The Honourable Minister.

MRS. HEMPHILL: It is a decrease of 0.1 percent and a salary decrease of \$400 as a result of reclassification of a vacant research position to a lower level and there is no additional SMYs in that.

MR. FILMON: What research projects, Mr. Chairman, have been completed during the year?

MRS. HEMPHILL: I'll just give a summary of the research projects, Mr. Chairman: A Vocation Education Study; TV Ontario Project and Assessment; An Evaluation of the First Two Years of the English-Ukrainian Bilingual Program; An Evaluation of the Pilot Vocational Data Processing Program; Core French Pilot Project Implementation Assessment; Core French Pilot Project Effective Connotive Assessment; The CAI '80 Project and Assessment; CAI Computer Assisted Instruction; Intention of Grade 12 Students 1982; Vocational Education Needs of the Mystery Lake School District; A Comparison of Teacher Qualifications and Teaching Assignments that I mentioned previously; Manitoba Report — In-Service Education and Training of Teachers; A Background Paper on Foreign Students in Elementary and Secondary Schools in Manitoba; Education in the Children of One-Parent Families — A Background Paper; The Effective Declining Enrolment; Superintendents Perceptions; Study of a Low-Profile School — River Heights School, Brandon, Manitoba; General Education Development Tests; Selected Student Attitudes 1973-1980.

MR. FILMON: Those were all studies that have been completed during the year, what projects or studies are currently underway?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Projects in progress are: Artists in Schools Program; Co-Operative Vocational Education Projects; Career Symposium; River East Microcomputer Project; International Baccalaureate; Choices Through Microcomputers, and St. James Assiniboia Instructional Television Assessment.

MR. FILMON: . . . listed specifically in discussing core French would the Minister prefer it to be under

this or would she prefer to discuss it under another item?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, I think that might most appropriately be discussed when we come to the budget for the bureau.

MR. FILMON: I wonder if the Minister could indicate any plans that she has for this branch in the near term.

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, obviously the branch is going to continue the activities that are underway, that had been begun before and that they are in the processing of completing. One of the major activities that they will be undertaking is assisting my department in major reviews or studies that we have identified that we want to undertake. One of the major ones, of course, will be the education finance review. The research department will be involved in that review and they will also be involved in examining and helping gather information on computer programming in the school divisions. We have a committee presently looking at this question and the department will be involved in that.

I might also suggest that there has been a tendency to have the research branch focus on examination or study of existing programs and that the emphasis has been on program evaluation which has been very beneficial. We will continue some of that but I think we will also use the branch to help give us information about issues and problems facing us and decisions and programs that we have to undertake so that we have adequate information to make decisions on where to go in computer programming, for instance. There will be some shift there in their activities.

MR. FILMON: I'm sorry, I don't think I wrote down how many SMYs there is in the research branch.

MRS. HEMPHILL: Twelve.

MR. FILMON: Could the Minister indicate the major cause for the increase in Other Expenditures; it's more than doubled so could she indicate the major components?

MRS. HEMPHILL: The major increase under the Other Expenditure category is due, in small measure, to a general increase in costs which accounts for \$6,000 and there is a \$60,000 additional amount of money in this budget for the purpose of helping carry out the major review activities that we're undertaking, such as the educational finance review. We have set aside an additional \$60,000 to cover that major activity and computer study.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Item No. 2.(a) Salaries—pass; 2.(b) Other Expenditures—pass. These items were considered under Resolution No. 50.

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$419,700 for Education Research for the fiscal year ending the 31 day of March 1983—pass.

Continuing with Resolution No. 51. Financial Support, Public Schools. 3.(a) School Grants and other Assistance.

The Honourable Member for Tuxedo.

MR. FILMON: I wonder if the Minister had any specific introductory remarks on this, I know that her opening statement largely addressed this topic but I wondered if she had anything else she wanted to address before we ask questions. I know that my colleagues all had a number of questions in the broad general area that is covered under Item 3. So if you would like to open it first, that's fine. Otherwise we have a number of areas that we'd like to question her on.

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, I think that my opening statement probably was a sufficient summary of this area and I'm prepared to receive questions in this category.

MR. J. WALLY MCKENZIE (Roblin-Russell): Mr. Chairman, I have a couple of matters I'd like to discuss with the Minister and the first one, of course, is the well-known problems we've experienced the last two weeks at Grandview.

The other one, of course, is Pelly Trail and the financial problems they're experiencing now is the Way Way Secappo Band see fit to remove their children from those schools, so those are the two subjects I'd like to discuss maybe in a broad sense, as my colleague mentioned.

I wonder if in fact I should rise in my place and again raise the problems that we've had for the last couple of weeks at Grandview, but maybe I think it'd be fair to discuss it now maybe because of the age of this school or other schools in this province that this may come to light again fairly quickly. I hope not. It's my understanding that a similar problem came about in the Beausejour area not so terribly long ago and although they were able to resolve that one, but there has been communication going back and forth between the two areas.

I thank the Minister and the Health Minister and their staff for the communication and the help that we've had with the problems at Intermountain. The unfortunate part of it is, even as I stand here tonight, they still haven't found where the problem is. There's a memo from the Minister today that they can open the school tomorrow if they leave the heating system off, etc., but there's snow out there in that country today, so I wonder if, in fact, they will be able to.

I think I should like to put into the record the sequence of events of this most unfortunate thing where the first indication was from whoever it was that the problem was heat, the medical reports; then, the next one, they said it was the flu; and then there was an indication that there was carbon monoxide some place in the building. It's my understanding from parents in the area there that they almost had to demand of the medical profession that they take a blood test of these children. There was children laying out on the grass and the hospital full, so finally the medical profession did see fit to take some blood tests and carbon monoxide showed up. I raise the matter should we be doing more research on schools of the age of the Grandview School, which has been built in my time in this House, at least the new portion of it was, I was part and parcel of the opening of that. Are these systems

breaking down because of the fact that there's air conditioning put in? I don't think there was air conditioning in that school when it was opened, but there's certainly air conditioning in there now and maybe we need to go and somebody — now whether it's this Minister or whether it's the Department of Labour or the Department of Health — better check and see if, in fact, that there are other schools in the province that are in the same condition as the Grandview, or maybe we don't at all. So I am asking the Minister today for funding to pay for this cost that's going to be involved, it is going to be enormous as I understand it, and yet as I stand here today we still can't find what the fault is or who's at fault in fact.

The Minister of Health gave me a memo this afternoon that said that during the past two weeks concerning all the tests having been completed and repairs made to the air conditioning system, and that the school routine should return to normal, but it's not normal because they can't turn the heating system on. He goes on and says, "I've been assured by my staff that monitoring of the school environment will continue for another week or two and the fact that the heating system although will be nonoperative should eliminate further problems." So it's not a normal situation at all. Then he says, "I understand that your mechanical and heating consultants, etc., will stay there for several days."

So the matter is one that I think deserves the attention of this Committee and the House while they possibly will maybe open the school tomorrow. I doubt it because of the fact that the snow being out there and I don't think the children could be asked to sit in a classroom with the temperatures that we have tonight without heat.

Then, of course, we discussed the problem of the students being out of school for two weeks and the Minister, I have her assurance that she has conversations with staff in the area and they will not suffer as a result of it. It's a problem that certainly has concerned a lot of people and I'd just like to raise it and draw to the attention of the Committee and the House that maybe the Minister or some department of government, because I'm sure there's other schools in the province of the same vintage or that were built the same time as the Grandview School because there were a lot of schools built in that time that may be running into the same problem.

The second one, is the problem of the withdrawal of the Indian students from the Rossburn School. That, of course, has been widely publicized by the press, but as I stand here tonight, and maybe the Minister has a copy of the Resolution, the Waywayseecappo Band owe Pelly Trail School Division some \$292,000 for tuition fees as of September, 1981. The unfortunate part, the school division had to go and borrow those monies to offset the outstanding account. It's an interesting sequence of events that has taken place. In '65, the Waywayseecappo Band bought space in the Rossburn School and then in 1973 they bought space in Major Pratt School in Russell. Now the Band are pulling out, but they want somebody to pick up that some \$76,000 of that space they bought, but the unfortunate part of it is they never paid for it in the first place and I wonder who's going to buy it. So in '81 then they opted out of the master tuition agree-

ment with the province and went on their own. So apparently the Band made two payments at the end of June, 1981, as I understand it, to Pelly Trail School Division but the records show that as of 1981, they owed, I think it was \$121,688 and some cents to Pelly Trail. So then Pelly Trail started to build the Band at the rate of \$1,800 per student; they took it as a broad average. At the end of '81, they had some discussions apparently, as I understand it, the fee had gone up to \$2,181 and there were some adjustments, but the figure then of the amount owing for these student fees was \$121,688 as I mentioned earlier.

Now for 1982, the tuition fees as at the end of March were another \$82,800 and then there is April, May and June which will be owing and that will be another \$82,800. Apparently, as I understand it, the Federal Department of Indian Affairs are paying these funds directly to the Band, but the Band isn't turning them over to Pelly Trail School Division. Pelly Trail School Division is at a loss as how they can possibly collect these fees and yet they are being deposited in accounts by the Band. So the total owing as of the 21st of April, this is the last time this matter was drawn to my attention, was \$292,624.14 to Pelly Trail School Division as of that date. As I mentioned in the resolution, the interest on those dollars with today's figures is a staggering figure when Pelly Trail has to go and borrow the money to cover that capital.

So if the Band moves out at the end of June which they're threatening to do and now they're in the process of rebuilding the old rink that they have on the reservation, what happens to those debts? How is Pelly Trail going to come about recovering those monies that are owing? There is a press release that's come out of the Russell Banner. There was a rink built on the reservation, Waywayseecappo, and it's a new area for me the last election, but they built the rink there. And why they built the rink — there's no water — so that they've never been able to flood the rink. The rink is built and the water is many miles away, so they have never been able to flood the rink but now they're going to turn it into a school. They are in the process now of converting that shell to a 24-classroom, library, administration, health care unit, shower, laundries and school. It says in this article here that funding came strictly from the Federal Government. It came from two sources; the Department of Indian Affairs has already come up with \$700,000 and the Medical Centre from the Federal Department has come up with another \$100,000. So they have \$800,000 and the second phase to turn this rink into a classroom they say will be another \$800,000. So it says, since September the Band has placed those tuition fees that they are not paying to Pelly Trail — they have some \$114,000 — in the special trust fund. I don't ask the Minister to solve this overnight. It is certainly not going to be easy but it is a matter that she and her staff should devote as much time as they could to the trustees and the people at Pelly Trail School Division because they are most concerned as I stand here this evening.

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, I am not sure that I had a direct question in those two issues or statements, but I did have a clear indication of concern and what the concerns are on those two issues and I will

respond to the concerns that were raised.

One of the main points, I think, that was made from the member opposite was the relationship or the age of the Grandview School and the fact that there are quite a number of other schools in the province who may be or of the same age and may therefore be having the same problem. I am not sure, and I think he also indicated, that the source has not been found and that is of concern to all of us, but it also suggests, I think, that it is not at all clear what the problem is and that it may not be related to the age of the school or to schools of the same age across the province. It may be a very unique, unusual situation and until we find what the source is, I think we are not in a position to speculate on what the problems might be or to give the consideration that is going to be required when we find out what the cause is to dealing with the problem both in the Grandview School or any other school should we feel that it is of a broader issue than just that one school situation.

The teachers and the school are going to try to make up the time. I think we have two concerns, all of us, and the first one is the health and safety of the children. That has to be the number one concern and the school board is taking that position and feels very strongly that they cannot put the children in a position of risk. So that they must be sure that the school is safe and I agree with the position that they are taking.

Our second concern will be that the children do not lose out in their studies and their academic program, that they are not the losers as a result of this problem. The teachers believe that they will be able to handle the lost time by extending the school day, by starting a little earlier and by reducing the lunch hour. I believe that they will try to do that first and see whether or not they feel they are making up the required time and covering the program for the children. We will only consider other alternatives if they feel the children cannot get what they need that way.

I suppose while I'm on my feet, Mr. Chairman, that I should respond to the second concern and that is the question of the withdrawal of the Band from the Pelly Trail School Division. This is a matter between the Band, the Federal Government and the school division. There is an agreement that they have and the negotiations that are under way are related to the parts of that legal contract. It is our understanding they are still negotiating the dollars that you are talking about, the board recognizes that and has accepted that the matter of fees is something that has to be worked out between the Band and themselves.

MR. MCKENZIE: Mr. Chairman, I thank you, I thank the Minister for her comments.

First of all, to the problems at Grandview, I think, well maybe the Honourable Minister and I in our comments have more or less left ourselves to believe that they haven't put their finger on the problem. It seems to me, from this letter today, that they must be satisfied by shutting the heating system off and the air conditioning system, so normal conditions will prevail if those two systems are not functioning and that's the one factor that I think, in these other schools in the province, that likely could create other environmental problems is the heating system or the refrigeration system or the air conditioning system.

From the Minister of Health's comments, they said it should return to normal providing those two systems are not functioning, so they have isolated it into that level and that's my concern in these other schools in the province that were built in that era, that there's, not necessarily but it's just possible, that certain problems could raise themselves. By addressing ourselves to that we might save some other schools, especially by checking them in the summer months.

The one, though, about Waywayseecappo, there is an arrangement between the Federal Government and the Band and Pelly Trail, but I would think if the Minister and her staff have addressed themselves to some of the quotations and releases that have been made by Mr. Lyle Longclaws blaming the system, the type of education, and I have several in front of me here if the Minister would like to look at them. They are blaming the educational system in this province, because he says here in articles: "The predominantly white communities will suffer from such moves and there's going to be more and more of them," as I read the article. They're tired of seeing taxpayers' dollars funding a solution that will never work, and it goes on and says that the children never graduate from high school. He says here there's only one student in I don't know how many years that graduated from Pelly Trail.

I'm just asking the Minister if she or her department are prepared to stand behind the school division in their efforts to collect this \$292,000 and the interest costs that school division is being asked to bear today on those borrowed funds, and I don't think it's the fault of Pelly Trail School Division. I think they've provided the best services that they could for the students; for the Native people as well, but they're caught in the middle now and the Minister says, as she understands it, the Federal Government and the Band have some kind of arrangement. That system hasn't worked and so they're here with a resolution saying that there's some \$292,000 owing to Pelly Trail School Division as of September, 1981, and they want to know what you're going to do about the government to help them collect that money, or if they can't collect it, what are they going to do? Are they going to write it off as a bad experience?

Those are some of the questions that they'd like the Minister to address herself to.

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, I recognize that this is a difficult issue and a very complex problem and that it involves several levels of elected representatives and an agreement between three parties, and that these problems, and this is one of them, are not going to be easy to resolve. I think that we all recognize that we are in a transition in a number of ways and that when we're going through change it is sometimes awkward and difficult and rocky and it is in this case.

It is also my understanding that the parties are talking to each other; that negotiations and discussions are still underway and that the matter has not reached a stalemate. I would not expect to either intervene or be involved in this process while they are able to continue with that. There is still possibilities, I think, that the matter can be settled between the parties affected although it is going to be difficult.

MR. McKENZIE: Well, maybe and maybe not. I am addressing myself to the resolution that was passed at the April 22nd meeting of Pelly Trail School Division and I read part of the resolution. The last part of the resolution: "Therefore Be It Resolved that the Division's Administrative Staff be instructed to take whatever steps as required to collect the \$292,000.00."

Can the Minister give me any hope or any possibility or any assurance that she'll send the best staff she has out to help Pelly Trail collect those funds, and then in the event that they don't collect them, what happens?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, one of the responsibilities of the Department of Education is to provide support and resources and help to school divisions. We have always taken the position, and I don't think I'm just talking about this last five months, although I have felt strongly about this, is that wherever there was help that was needed or could be given by my department, the people in my department, that we were prepared to give it and that we would give help and aid to both parties if necessary. In other words, we're prepared to do whatever we can to work with people that are involved in difficulties or a dispute, so that we would definitely make resources available to the school division to help them with this and any other problems that they have.

In terms of the question of, if they cannot collect the money, what then; I think my position would be that we hope that they can resolve it themselves; they are still talking and still negotiating, that we are prepared to provide whatever support and resources to help with the conflict that we can. In the event that it cannot be resolved and they cannot collect the money, we will deal with this situation when it arises.

MR. McKENZIE: I thank the Honourable Minister for those comments.

The one then of Intermountain School Division, and I think the Minister gave me all the assurances that was required in the Question Period today, that because there's likely a lot of capital costs that's going to be involved in that, which they haven't budgeted for, as I understand it, this year, and how far this examination by all these experts who are in there now exploring. It's quite possible it could be involving a whole new heating system and maybe an air conditioning system, they're not sure, and I don't think anybody is sure at this time. As long as the Minister can assure us that their department is prepared to go out, sit down with them and help them over these most difficult times. She said today, I think, that she is awaiting their report of the costs that will be incurred from these professional people that they've been hiring to come in and assist them to resolve the problem that she is prepared to take a look at. I think that is about all I can ask and I thank the Minister for her sentiments.

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, I realize that there was, once again, not a question asked, but probably a wish for confirmation of these statements or the points that the member made. We do have Capital out of Revenue Budget in the Department of Education and while it is normally for more routine things, there

has been past experience like the asbestos that was found in schools that was causing a danger and a threat to children, where we are prepared to give extra support and help to school divisions when they are dealing with fire hazards or asbestos hazards or whatever it is that is causing this one that we are not quite sure of, so that we would be prepared to receive a submission from the school division when they have tallied the extraordinary costs related to this problem.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Member for Kirkfield Park.

MRS. GERRIE HAMMOND (Kirkfield Park): Mr. Chairman, my question is about the grants. It's in reference to the question I asked the Minister in the House the other day and the grants to St. Boniface School Division. The Minister indicated that the grants were there for any school division and that no school division has applied for a grant. I am wondering where these grants were announced, just where they come in and how much money there is set aside for these special grants.

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, a specific grant was not announced but they were announced in general when I was discussing money that would be available through this present Budget to help school boards deal with the impact and consequences of declining enrolment. In other words, I made general statements that there was going to be support for small schools and the impact of declining enrolment without specifying specifically the amount that would be made available.

MRS. HAMMOND: Is the Minister, when she made a statement in the House on March the 3rd on the Education Financing Program, she said that the government would implement two special grant programs and one was to provide assistance to the almost 300 small schools in the province. Was this the program that the Minister was referring to?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, that was part of the program that I was referring to, the Support for Small Schools Program, and the other part of the support, I described as some additional help or some support to school divisions to help offset the increased costs related to the increased plant costs related to school closures.

MRS. HAMMOND: Mr. Chairman, to the Minister, I am having a problem here. If the grants were not announced and yet the money is there, how are the school divisions to know that there is a program there for them to apply for?

MRS. HEMPHILL: School divisions know that there is money there to apply for, Mr. Chairman, because they have been notified directly. It is in the Estimates and they have been notified that there is money available for them to apply for, should they wish, and they have received that notice directly.

MRS. HAMMOND: Then, Mr. Chairman, how much money has been allocated and where will we find it in the Estimates?

MRS. HEMPHILL: It's part of the total amount of money in 16.3.(a); it's contained in the \$333 million.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Tuxedo.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister could clarify — she has us all very curious and I am sure there are many divisions in the province who are just waiting breathlessly to find in which pocket the Minister has stuffed these extra dollars. Earlier today, and I had asked for a copy of her opening remarks and I think that in the opening remarks, she broke down the 16 point whatever million of special grants that she said was available into 6.6 million for the equalization for divisions with low assessment basis, 5.8 million for grants to those divisions who have been inequitably treated by virtue of the fact that their 1980 expenditure base was low, then she referred to 2 million special grant to Winnipeg No. 1 and then she referred to, I think, 2.5 million to maintain small schools. Now, is that where the money is?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. FILMON: That is one of the reasons why it is easier if we do have the information in front of us, so we can cross-reference, and then it doesn't require three or four questions back and forth to try and get at the point. So the amount is 2.5 million for this year, it is to maintain small schools and it is specifically a reference to, in essence, keeping the building open. So it is the operation and maintenance of the building but it doesn't cover programming costs, constructional costs or other, is that right?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Not quite, Mr. Chairman. There are two parts to that allocation, Mr. Chairman, and the one that I call the program to support small schools is going to be announced during the Estimates in detail, the parts of the program and the money that will be available and the criteria. I will be happy to go into the details of that program with the honourable member at that time. But what I would like to communicate to him now is that the Small Schools Support Program is not intended to forestall or stop school closures. It is not related to school closures. It is designed specifically to give additional resources, both materials and equipment and personnel, to small schools who presently have a small number of children and declining numbers of children which are the basis upon which they receive funding from the Provincial Government.

I think what we are saying here is that the impact of one declining enrolment on these schools and the money that they are able to get from the Provincial Government, the impact of the basis that is established in the new Educational Support Program and the old Foundation Program which requires bodies in reasonable numbers, requires students in order to receive resources, that they are at a disadvantaged position. They often do not have access to sufficient resources to provide the same quality of programming that others with larger numbers of students have, so that the purpose of the program is not to stop small schools from closing. There were 214 of them I think in about 1972 and there are now about 251, Mr.

Chairman, so it's clear that they are not going to go out of business. The number of small schools are increasing. They have been doing a good job of educating children and they are going to continue to do it. The support for them is not to give them a shot in the arm so they don't close, it is to give those that are going to stay open additional resources to help them provide the quality of education for the children in their schools.

MR. FILMON: Can the Minister tell me what has happened to the 214 identified small schools in 1972, are they all still operating? Those same 214?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Many, I think most of them, are still operating. There have been some changes. Some will have closed but others, because of the declining enrolment, have fallen into the small school category so that the numbers are increasing although some of the original ones that were there 10 years ago may not still be there. What I am suggesting is that there is a fairly large number of them and regardless of minor shifts, up or down, that there is going to continue to be a significant number of small schools that are educating children across the Province of Manitoba 10 years ago, now and 10 years from now.

MR. FILMON: I would be interested in knowing whether or not, indeed, a significant number of those 214 that were identified as small schools in 1972 are still operating, because I can recognize it as enrolments decline that any numbers of schools — whatever your definition is of small schools — will drop below a certain level and become defined as a small school. But that doesn't necessarily mean that those 214 or any significant portion of them are still around. I'd be interested because it would obviously be pertinent to the Minister's argument.

The other thing that I want to know then is if this \$2.5 million is not put forward with the purpose of forestalling school closures, from what pocket or source did the Minister offer funds to the St. Boniface School Division this week presumably to forestall school closures?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, first of all, there was not an offer made to St. Boniface to stop school closures. There is a portion of the money in the \$2.5 million that has been set aside for this year until we can bring in the Educational Review, the new financial review, which will build in as our resolution suggested in this House, that we debated at length, that will build in the impact of declining enrolment into the Educational Support Finance Review that there is money available to help school divisions who are faced with school closures, faced with making decisions about closing schools to help them offset the increased plant costs of keeping those schools open.

I have never suggested, Mr. Chairman, that this was a great deal of money. I have always said that we have made an attempt to provide some help and support to school divisions to get through a very difficult problem in this year until we can provide this help through the regular programming through the new finance system, Mr. Chairman, so that it is on a limited basis, that we know the numbers of school divisions that are

considering school closures and we know the numbers of schools that they are considering closing. We believe that we can give some additional financial support to them should they wish it and should the additional financial help make a difference to their decision. In some cases it may, Mr. Chairman, and in other cases it may not. It is there and available to give help if they want it to the degree that we are able to help and recognizing its limitations.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister could indicate what portion of the \$2.5 million is available for these so-called increased plant costs of keeping schools opened and what amount was mentioned in her letter to the St. Boniface School Division as possibly being available. One was with respect to Prendergast; one was with respect to the program at St. Boniface College and one was with respect to another school, the name of which escapes me.

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, the amounts that I suggested in my letter to St. Boniface — I do not have the exact dollar amount in front of me because I do not have a copy of the letter — but the areas that he discussed I think were accurate. It was, I think, 78,000 and one was in the 62,000 range, 240 thousand for the combination of the three, I think.

The letter confirmed that the information they had sent to me indicating what the increased plant costs were for them from their figures, that we had checked those figures and that I accepted them. In other words, I was saying, that my department has looked at the figures you have given me to indicate your increased plant costs and I accept that they are accurate and on that basis if they wished they could apply to me for financial support through that allocation and that I would be prepared to respond to them accepting the figures that they had given me as their increased costs.

MR. FILMON: The Minister hasn't responded to the first portion of my dual-part question and that is what portion of the \$2.5 million is available for this type of purpose?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, while I might have preferred to have all of the program totally worked out prior to coming into Estimates, we are not always able to meet our own deadlines or programs. Some of the details of the Small Schools Programs and the criteria and that money and the program will be made available to school divisions are in the process of being finalized or being worked out in detail right now. We do know that the dollar amount for the total program is \$2.5 million and that the components of it are support for small schools and support for school divisions to help offset plant cost increases, but the total distribution of it within that is still being worked out.

MR. FILMON: In view of the ad hoc nature of this program that the Minister has come up with, can she tell me on what basis she has estimated \$2.5 million as being potentially responsive to the needs that are out there?

MRS. HEMPHILL: I'm not sure if it's appropriate for

me, Mr. Chairman, to answer a question with a question, but would the member indicate if he is asking me about the Small Schools Program or the Offsetting the Plant Costs Program?

MR. FILMON: Both, Mr. Chairman.

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, I respect the member's right to his feelings that it is an ad hoc basis. I'm not sure that I can agree with him. One of the problems that we had, Mr. Chairman, is that we came into and inherited an already established budget and that as the member opposite will know that does put certain limitations on what you are able to do. What we have done, Mr. Chairman, is identify programs that we believe are needed and required and we have made some attempt to the degree that we were able to, within the existing money that we had, make decisions on in this budget year. So that I am not suggesting for a minute that the \$2.5 million is going to solve all the problems of the small schools. I am not suggesting that it is going to be a sufficient amount of money to give them all the help that they need or feel they require.

In fact, Mr. Chairman, none of the school divisions presently receive all of the money they think they need or require for programs. We have to make some judgments about what money we can make available. What we are saying is that we are going to give support that is not presently there and that we are going to give additional help for additional resources, materials and personnel to small schools, and we are going to do it to the degree that we can with the money that we have been able to make available and that is \$2.5 million for the two programs. We are giving as much help as we can within the limitations that we were under, Mr. Chairman.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, if the Minister is telling me that she has a program and an allocation in her Estimates for which there are no criteria, for which there are no guidelines, under which school divisions might apply for which there appears to be no basis upon which anyone might judge who might be eligible at the moment or whether or not the funding is adequate and she says that's not an ad hoc program, then I'd like to know what it is.

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, there is definitely criteria and there is definitely guidelines. I did not say there weren't any; I said the final details of the guidelines in the program were in the stages of being completed, so he will soon know, and I hope it's not too long from now, what all the criteria and guidelines and controls are for the program and he will then be able to see and feel confident that this program is not an ad hoc program, Mr. Chairman, but is indeed founded on a solid basis with good criteria and guidelines. I just have not announced them to date.

As far as the support for helping to offset the additional plant costs, those are recognized and understood. School divisions know we have categories for plant costs and they know what they are and they know what will be included.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, with all due respect, to

appropriate an amount, as I say, is not based on need but is based on what the Minister says her department or the government is able to afford at the moment given all the constraints that they're dealing with, to put aside that amount and refer to it in the Estimates without having first defined the criteria in detail so that they can be understood by anybody including members on this side or, more importantly, people who might as school divisions might want to apply for it. It seems to me to be a pretty nebulous and ad hoc approach to things and you may very well come up with excellent guidelines and well defined in the future, but the fact of the matter is that you obviously didn't have them when the idea sprang forward and therefore it can't be very soundly based. It means that now you will cut the guidelines to fit the cloth as opposed to having cut the cloth to fit the guidelines and the criteria and the need that is defined and established out there. It seems to me like a backwards way of doing things.

MRS. HAMMOND: Mr. Chairman, further to the discussion on the plant opening, I think the Minister, in fact, did indicate that there are three reasons that school divisions are closing schools and it's money, program and declining enrolment. It seems to me that it is really all three. Declining enrolment causes program lack and money lack, and then to say that there is no money for declining enrolment is the reason that she gave me in the House.

What has happened to school divisions, and there are two notable examples which are St. Boniface and St. James-Assiniboia with Columbus School, is when the Minister sent out a notice to tell school divisions, hold off closure until I can come up with the program as May 30th. That created a lot of expectations, maybe not from the school divisions themselves but certainly from the parents. They are sitting out there wondering why their schools aren't being opened because of this money or this band-aid that's going to come and help them out of their dilemma. It's coming at the end of May when certainly schools have to have their planning in effect by then. A school like Columbus, in particular, for the Minister to send out something to a school division and said, please hold off your closing, when they've had this closure and told the parents they've had them enrolling in other schools, seems to me irresponsible at best.

I am just wondering when I see this and when the parents find out just exactly how little help there is and that divisions are looking at it and not even approaching the department for help because they see it as little or nothing, then what good is the program. I would just like some answers for probably the parents out there.

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, the member opposite is indicating a great deal of concern that I understand for a problem that is very serious. I must say that I wish that we did not find ourselves in the dilemma that we are in now and that it would have helped a great deal if what had happened in most other provinces, a large number of other provinces, had happened here in Manitoba; that is, that the impact of declining enrolment that we have been going through that we knew was going to peak last year and the year before,

that we could see and identify would cause a lot of difficulties and that this would be a crunch year with a lot of consequences and a lot of problems for school divisions.

It would have been very helpful if, when the Education Support Program was designed, that was going to exist during this critical three-year period if there had been some attempt to address and give support to school divisions and recognize the declining enrolment factor during this period. It might also have been helpful if, as other provinces did, there had been preparation and an implementation of procedures and guidelines to deal with the question of school closure so that when school divisions were faced with the difficult decisions that this procedure was in place and everybody would know what it was and would go through it. I think that would have eased the problem considerably. Since one of the messages we're getting from a lot of people is not necessarily and not only related to the closure of schools, but to their concern over the process and the procedures undertaken for making those decisions.

So it might be easy to say and to stand up now in this House, Mr. Chairman, and to say that this is too little too late; I might add that I can agree with them to the point that we have been in office only five months and we have been in office at a time when the crunch is here and upon us and that we did not have a lot of time to prepare for it either in a financial way or other support. So what we are doing is not perfect and what we are doing is not eliminating the difficulties or the problems, but what we are doing is attempting to give some degree of help and support within the limitations, both financial and time, that we find ourselves in.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Tuxedo.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, can the Minister indicate if there is a decrease in enrolment this year over last year? Does this result in a decrease in the number of basic operating units upon which the grant to the division is predicated?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, there is no decrease in the basic operating units.

MR. FILMON: Does that mean that the level of their grants is as if they had not had that decline in enrolment this year?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, the decrease in enrolment means a decrease in the eligible expenditure base which is the basis upon which school divisions receive their money, so there is a decrease there.

MR. FILMON: But in terms of their basic operating units upon which the grant is based, they get the same amount as if there had not been a decrease.

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, the change in the eligible enrolment brings down the eligible expenditure and that has a direct effect on the extra operating support that school divisions get, so that there is some accommodation by maintaining the basic oper-

ating units at the same rate, but there is an offsetting impact that is related to the major basis of receiving support, the eligible expenditure enrolment, which is the base for the eligible enrolment which is the basis for receiving support. The one is not enough to offset the increased costs related to the declining enrolment factor.

One of the ways that we can recognize this, Mr. Chairman, is if we give, and we can give some examples of figures where the Provincial Government will have given a per pupil expenditure increase in the range of 16 to 17 percent and, in fact, I believe that I am correct when I say that is about the average of the money coming from the Provincial Government was in the range of about 17 percent. Yes, I just confirmed that the figure in my mind was accurate. At the same time, we can look at a number of school divisions where we have given an overall increase of 17 percent and the increase in their budget will be down around 12 or 13 percent, sometimes as low as 9 or 10 percent. While sometimes the assessment base is the significant factor in the reduction, in frequent cases it is the declining enrolment factor that causes the difference between the large percentage increase that we are giving in the impact on the school division's budget. We could give some examples to show that discrepancy, if the member wished.

MR. FILMON: If the basic operating units remain constant and the CPI has basically been applied to that increase, that would mean then they would be getting a 12 percent increase on the basic operating units. The Minister is saying that the intention is to give 16 or 17 overall, so there is a shortfall of 4 percent or something. This is where we get into the need for some of the figures that I asked for earlier.

MRS. HEMPHILL: They are being prepared and we can put them in your hands tomorrow morning.

MR. FILMON: I am just wondering whether this is an appropriate time to ask that Committee rise, and I might indicate that I think I neglected to ask, when I asked for the 1982 figures, I think they're probably just as readily available, the 1981 and 1980 comparisons in terms of mill rates, for some of those figures that I asked for.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you prepared to pass item 3.(a)?
Committee rise