

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, June 5, 1978

Time: 8:00 p.m.

SUPPLY — CONSUMER, CORPORATE AND INTERNAL SERVICES

MR. CHAIRMAN, Mr. Warren Steen: Committee come to order. We are on Page 19, Resolution 31, 2.(b) Research and Planning. The Member for Transcona was speaking prior to the Private Members' Hour. The Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: Yes, I wanted to move on, Mr. Chairman, to the issue of the couple that lost their money with the travel agency that went bankrupt even though the owner of the travel agency is still running another firm and that's the Siddon case. I asked the Minister questions about this in the Legislature and I'd like to ask him whether in fact his Research and Planning group have looked into the Ontario legislation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister.

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, I'm advised that we are familiar with, we've looked into the Ontario action in this area. At the same time we're discussing the matter with the Manitoba Travel Agents Association which has an interest in taking some action on its own that would help to maintain the integrity of the services provided by its member organization and we are hopeful that they will be able to take some action which will assist in maintaining higher standards within the travel industry generally.

As we mentioned in the House, there have been relatively few instances of this having occurred and I think perhaps this instance that you quote is unique in terms of the size of the loss that was sustained by the customer. That is not to say that this will not become a problem again but the industry itself is very much aware of the need for some self-policing in that area.

MR. PARASIUK: Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't think that's a sufficient answer. You know, this happened last fall and what was involved was \$2,400 and it was \$2,400 that a couple had saved up for quite a while. This was going to be their once-in-a-lifetime trip and they went to a travel agent and — I don't even know the name of the travel agent — I know that the newspaper reports have carried the name of the travel agency that went bankrupt and they also published the name of the other travel agency which is still in operation owned by the same company. It strikes me that what's happened here is that the individual who owns that particular firm has used the safeguards of a limited company to limit his obligations in this respect. I think that there is a matter of lack of confidence in the travel agencies and I'm amazed that the Manitoba travel agents haven't acted to date. I think that in the one sense we are somewhat fortunate that this case occurred now and in some isolation and it's true that we haven't had too many cases in Manitoba to date. However, they certainly had a number of cases in Ontario prior to 1974 and that's why they brought in the legislation there — I think they had something like over 100 cases — and a few years prior to that in Britain there were not only hundreds of people who were affected, there were thousands of people who were affected. I would hate for us to let something like this slide until we have not one unfortunate situation but a catastrophe involving hundreds or even thousands of people. That's why I think we've been given a warning. The warning, I think, has hurt that couple tremendously.

I am appalled, personally, that the Manitoba Travel Agents haven't banded together and compensated the couple for their loss and I'm appalled that they haven't done anything to date because I think that self-policing would have been a method for them but they haven't acted to date. Since it's about five or six months since that bankruptcy and since nothing has happened, I'm wondering whether in fact it isn't the duty of the Manitoba Consumers Bureau to sit down with the travel agents — they should have done it beforehand — ask them what they're going to do, get a definite commitment that they will provide compensation to the couple, get a definite commitment that they will set up a self-policing system, which is satisfactory, I think, to the Consumers Bureau as well as to the travel agents, and failing that type of action on the part of the travel agents, because it has not happened to date,

that the government should be prepared to bring in legislation.

Now, I intend to bring in some legislation if I have to in this respect as a private member's public bill but I think it would be far better if the government acted and I think it would be far better if the Manitoba Travel Agents acted prior to that. You know, if some of the members opposite don't think that this is a critical issue, if they think that that couple losing \$2,400 is something to scoff at, I think they're wrong. I haven't seen any solutions being posed for that particular couple and I haven't seen any action being proposed by the Travel Agents Association. They surely must know what type of action is required to prevent this type of situation from reoccurring and yet it strikes me that they've been stonewalling. How many people have deposited since the Siddon case and how many people are, as a result, exposed? I don't even know if we have that type of information but it strikes me that these are things that the Research and Planning group should be looking into. What I'm afraid of is that I have raised about three or four items that should be looked into and the Minister assures me that they are being looked into and that they are being monitored but I don't know if anything is happening. That's the key thing and frankly I raise these issues this year; I will be raising the ones I raised this afternoon again next year in terms of getting an update and a performance evaluation of what this group has been doing but I think, frankly, that the Siddon case and the issue arising from the Siddon case is far too important to be left until next year. So I'm asking the Minister if he has already met with the travel agents, if they have assured him that action will be taken in the very near future and if they have assured him that some action will be taken by the travel agents to provide some type of compensation for the Siddon people.

MR. MCGILL: Well, Mr. Chairman, I can tell the member again that there has been consultation between our department and the Travel Association. They are aware of the need for corrective action and preventive action in this area. I'm sure that the publicity given to this loss suffered by a customer has had some negative effect on their position and the amount of business they have been able to transact which involves deposits having to be made. But I again tell the member that we are not unmindful of the problem that exists here and that there has been consultation and there has been communication between the travel people and our Bureau. These matters are not dealt with in an overnight way. We want to ensure that the opportunity is given to the Travel Association to do the sort of thing, in a self-policing way, that would be, I think, extremely helpful to their image and to the industry generally.

I should point out to the member that there have been at least three cases where losses appear to have been sustained by people who were clients of individual travel agents and that after some assistance from this department restitution was made and what seemed to be a loss resulted eventually in the travel agency making good. In this particular instance, in this case of a rather major amount, we cannot report that kind of progress but we are very sympathetic to what has happened. We are very anxious, as the Member for Transcona is anxious, that this not happen in the future. We think the opportunity should be given to the Agency Association to take that corrective action. Failing that, we will have to reconsider that matter in terms of, as the member suggests, some kind of legislation.

MR. PARASIUK: Well, I would like to get more specific on this. Is the Minister saying that his department has had consultations with the Manitoba Travel Agents' Association but that in the six months between the Siddon case happening and the present day, the Manitoba Travel Agents' Association have not been able to confirm with the department that they are going to compensate, provide some type of compensation for the Siddon couple for their loss of over \$2,400 which was incurred because the Siddon couple had good faith in the Manitoba travel agents? Don't they think that there is some obligation on their part to provide some type of compensation for the Siddons for their loss because they had good faith in them? Have they indicated that they are prepared to act to provide compensation to the Siddon couple?

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, I'm advised that the Association at this point and because this matter is in the bankruptcy courts, the particular agency involved is in bankruptcy and what determinations will be made there are in process but, in the meantime, there has been no inclination received so far from the agency to undertake to compensate this client of this bankrupt agency for the loss sustained. Now they may well be awaiting the final recovery from the bankruptcy courts but up to this point I can tell the member that this inclination from the Agencies' Association has not been received so far.

MR. PARASIUK: Has the Minister used his moral suasion with the Manitoba Travel Agents to persuade them to provide compensation— has he done so to date?

MR. MCGILL: Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't know what the member really includes in "moral suasion."

Monday, June 5, 1978

If he means has the department made efforts to draw this matter to the attention of the agency more specifically, certainly that consultation and that communication has been effected. I have not been personally involved in any of the discussions relative to this matter.

MR. PARASIUK: We can confirm then that the Minister has not been personally involved and that the department to date has been ineffective in gaining any type of specific concrete assurance from the Travel Agents' Association that they will provide definite action to compensate the couple for their loss of over \$2,400.00. Given that his department has been ineffective to date, is the Minister prepared to intervene to ensure that the Manitoba Travel Agents' Association seriously attempts to provide compensation?

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, while there may have been no sign of progress in this matter up to this point, I am not convinced that that will not take place. I'm not prepared to say at this time and at this stage whether or not any direct intervention would be entertained. I would suspect not, that the department is capable and is skilled in these matters and I think that they are well able to conduct the investigation and to make recommendations to the travel agency which would bring about some better general policing of the acceptance of deposits by agencies.

MR. PARASIUK: Well, Mr. Chairman, the agency itself is in bankruptcy but the owner of that agency is operating another agency. I don't believe that the Siddons can lay claim against the other agency — maybe they are — but the point is that here we have a Consumers Bureau, I think we have a flagrant abuse of the consumer by a travel agency and the Consumers Bureau has been negotiating and consulting supposedly for a period of six months, has not been able to achieve anything specific, and the Minister is saying that that's sufficient, that he's satisfied with that type of performance. It strikes me that the Minister is saying that that's sufficient, that he's satisfied with that type of performance. It strikes me that the Minister should, in fact, be acting directly in this particular case. And I see that the Member for Wolseley is probably providing some type of advice. Perhaps he could provide the advice publicly too as to inform us of how the Siddons can get some type of compensation because while all this is going on they are out over \$2400 and I don't think that they're the type of couple that can easily shrug off a \$2400 loss especially since they've saved up for a long time for this particular trip. I think it's quite a shock to them at their age to have this situation arise, and I think it's much more shocking for them to see this company, or the owners of the company, operating another company. And they can't touch it and they just observe, they see that going on and they wonder to themselves what type of society is this that we live in when these types of situations can arise and be permitted to exist.

You know, if we didn't have a Department of Consumer Affairs, if we didn't have a Consumers Bureau perhaps one could then argue that we should establish one to try and ensure that these situations wouldn't arise. But we do have a Department of Consumer Affairs. We do have a Consumers Bureau. It's not been able to achieve anything concrete with this specific agency. It's not been able to get anything concrete from the Manitoba Travel Agents' Association with respect to compensation, and the Minister says with respect to the issue of compensation he's hopeful that despite the fact that six months of negotiation haven't yielded anything, he's hopeful that something might happen in the future and therefore he won't directly intervene personally. I just don't see any logic in that. I think all the evidence points to the opposite. The agency has had sufficient time to act. The travel agents have had sufficient time to act. The Consumers Bureau has had sufficient time either to be influential or not influential in this particular matter. I think the time has come where the Minister really has to get involved in something like this and I can't understand why the Minister has this great hesitation to get involved in this particular case.

If you go on and ask the question about how will we be safeguarded as a society against something like this happening again in Manitoba, again the Minister says, "Well, let's rely on the private Manitoba Travel Agents Association for self-policing." Now, if we look at their performance to date that's not sufficient. I'd be delighted if the Minister could announce something specific with respect to a self-policing proposal that the Travel Agents Association has put together, but if they've got nothing even tentative to offer after six months what are we going to do — wait for three years, four years, five years before something happens, because nothing is happening and that's why I think it's really quite critical for the department to come to grips with this particular issue. Therefore does the Minister have anything concrete to tell the Committee regarding the tentative or proposed Travel Agents Association self-policing system? Have they got one in mind? Do they have anything specific to offer in this respect?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before the Minister answers can I ask the members at the back of the table who are still continuing to debate the City of Brandon amendment bill if they could do it in a little lower volume? The Minister.

Mr. McGill: Mr. Chairman, I don't know what I can add to the observations that I've already made to the Member for Transcona who has repeated the concern he has and which we all feel for the loss sustained in this individual circumstance. I point out to him again that this is a matter before the Bankruptcy Courts at the moment. He points out that the bankrupt travel agent is still operating another company. I'm advised that amendments to the Federal Bankruptcy Law that are being contemplated are designed to eliminate just this kind of corporate shifting that apparently seems to have been possible in this case. The federal law will apply and to that end some amendments will be made if they haven't already been made to prevent a similar escape in the future.

Mr. Chairman, this matter has not been finally resolved. I am not able to report on what specific plans the travel agency has to do some policing on its own, but I'm sure that the unfavourable publicity resulting from this loss will make them rather anxious to correct the situation and do so as quickly as possible.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Chairman, you know the Minister raises these hopes but, you know, I point out the evidence which says the opposite. Now, on what basis does the Minister come to the conclusion that the Manitoba Travel Agents Association will do something to either provide compensation or set up a self-policing mechanism? What tangible evidence does he have, over the last six months, to back up his sanguine hopes in this respect? If he had any evidence whatsoever maybe I could agree with him. But since he is providing no evidence whatsoever I don't know how we can agree that this is an issue that we should just gloss over and wait and see, and see if they do something in the future because I'm sure that they are good people and that they are as concerned with the Siddons as we are. I don't think that's enough. Now, can the Minister give any evidence whatsoever to back up his sanguine hopes?

MR. McGill: Mr. Chairman, I'm not giving any further evidence but I suspect that the member is somewhat in error in describing my hopes as sanguine; they are anything but. I am optimistic of the kind of corrective action that will be taken and there is no greater or more compelling reason for the agency to take that action than to have their business eroded by the kind of unfavourable publicity that has resulted from the actions of one individual member.

MR. PARASIUK: Then he has no sanguine hopes; he just has hopes without any basis whatsoever apart . . . I don't know.

MR. McGill: There is no blood on it.

MR. PARASIUK: Well, you know, I am amazed in that respect. What we have is a situation where the Minister is going to say that he is prepared to sit by and play with fire and hope that the Travel Agents Association will come up with some self-policing system and if they don't in the next six months, 12 months, 18 months — because he has not set any time limit on them as to when they should set up such a policing mechanism — that we will sit by and live on borrowed time, waiting for something that could happen to happen. And when that happens, I wonder what position the Minister is going to be in if in fact we do have another situation where a couple loses its money. I think in that situation the Minister surely will be directly responsible and directly accountable. So it strikes me that what he would want to do would be to make sure that he has a reasonable proposal in hand from the Manitoba Travel Agents Association as to how they will deal with this matter, when they will deal with it, and if they don't deal with it in three months that he would be prepared to do something.

I think it's important for him to do something in this legislative session because if he doesn't do anything now, we'll have to wait another whole year. Since the whole travel business is really booming with a lot of tour operations and a lot of cut-rate operations where people are really trying to compete with each other, there is a tendency that a couple of fly-by-night operations will get into the act; advertise, because advertising in some respects doesn't cost them that much money; get people involved and we'll get a whole tour that may lose its money. Now, if we talk about a tour on a — I don't know the plane sizes but, you know, you could have 60 or 70 people involved, you could have 90 people involved. I know that —(Interjection)— That's right, you can have up to 450 people involved with a 747, and that can happen with just one company, one case That's a lot of Manitobans who will be affected, so I'm really quite amazed that the Minister won't give a commitment that he will have something definite in place by the end of this Legislative session in order to safeguard the people of Manitoba from this problem reoccurring.

MR. McGill: The Member for Transcona is beginning to infer now that the Minister of Consumer Affairs is going to be responsible in the future for bankruptcy losses throughout the tends to make

the responsibility and the office rather unattractive. We do have federal bankruptcy laws to deal with bankruptcy matters. No matter what the Member for Transcona says, we all are sympathetic to this individual loss but there may be, and there probably will continue to be, losses in connection with bankruptcies that occur in businesses. We'll do our best to avoid those kind of bankruptcies occurring.

MR. PARASIUK: How do you deal with it in the real estate business if someone is in fact going to buy a house? I think that sellers and vendors are protected by some system. What is that system? You know, the sellers and vendors are protected from companies going bankrupt and we've had companies go bankrupt recently in the whole real estate area. I think that the sellers and the purchasers have not been affected and they have not lost financially because some system exists, either through the real estate association setting up a self-policing mechanism or because legislation is in place to protect the buyer and seller of houses. Now nothing seems to exist with respect to buyers of tours, and since this is an area that really is growing, since more people are involved, since we have received some warning, I think that we should at least look at some of the lessons we might have learned in the real estate area and apply them here. Now is there a provincial Act or set of regulations in place that affects the real estate industry to protect sellers and buyers of houses from any loss resulting or arising from the bankruptcy of a real estate company? Is there anything in place right now?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Perhaps the Member for Transcona might be in a better position to ask that question under Resolution 33, Item 4. Securities Commission. In the smaller print, it goes on and says Real Estate Brokers Act.

MR. PARASIUK: Well, no, Mr. Chairman, with all due respect, I think that this is to do with research and planning and the point is, I'm trying to find out whether it is possible for the Research and Planning group of the Consumers Bureau to determine whether something else exists that could be applied in this particular case, and it specifically falls under this particular appropriation; if I ask it under the Securities Commission, then want to relate it back to this particular case, I won't be able to. That is why I'm asking it now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I think, as Chairman of the Committee, that the Minister has said that the Research and Planning people are looking into it.

MR. PARASIUK: Is there a Provincial Act in place that affects the real estate industry?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister.

MR. MCGILL: I'm not aware of any specific statute that would prevent bankruptcies from occurring. . . and this is in effect a bankruptcy. . .

MR. PARASIUK: No, that protects the sellers and buyers of houses. These are the individuals who could be involved when a real estate company goes bankrupt. They put in deposits, they might have even paid a certain amount; they don't lose that, there was some system in place so that the individuals don't lose if a real estate company goes bankrupt. We have had Showcase Realty go bankrupt and a lot of agents lost money as a result but I don't think any individuals lost money. I think that is because we have legislation in place that prevents them from losing money in these particular circumstances. And we have had Mousseau Mills go bankrupt as well.

Now, agents have come to me raising a whole set of questions here, but I agree, it is not the individuals who have lost money, it is the salesmen who have lost money and I think they have got a particular problem. But the individuals haven't lost money, and my point is that in this particular case, the individuals can lose money when a tour agency goes bankrupt, and I am raising this point after the Minister has said, "Well, I know that companies will go bankrupt and that people will lose money if companies go bankrupt." All I am saying is that people don't lose money in the real estate business if companies go bankrupt and I want the same type of protection for individual purchasers of trips and tours.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Can we have a little more quietness. The Minister.

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, I am advised that we do have, under the Securities Commission, some bonding requirements and an audit certificate program for real estate firms and this has been reasonably successful. But despite the bonding that has been required, there have been two or three bankruptcies resulting in fairly substantial losses in this industry as well. Those losses have

been suffered by people within the industry and people involved in the actual operations.\$

MR. PARASIUK: I think that you are going to have bankruptcies, and those people who are involved in the industry know the industry, know that there are some risks involved and unfortunately probably have to roll with the punches. But the people who go forward and talk to a real estate agent and list their homes, and those people who deal through a real estate agent and buy a home, these people have complete faith in the system and they are protected. They are protected, and the same thing should hold true for people who are going to a travel agency and buying a place on a tour to go to England next summer to visit their grandparents or something like that. I don't think that that is too much to ask for. We have something in place already for the real estate agency; I think surely we should try to get something in place, either of a voluntary nature — but since we haven't got anything to date, can't we get something in through Statute Law Amendments to set up some type of a legislative requirement requiring bonding so that individuals wouldn't be hurt? Now, if the travel agency goes bankrupt and the tour company that is selling the spaces on the tour to the travel agency has difficulty, at least they have a mechanism to monitor each other. They know the industry; they know the fly-by-night outfits; they can do the checking. I don't think individuals going out and trying to get a good price on a trip to Britain or on a trip to France or somewhere else to visit relatives or what have you, have the resources to check out whether in fact this is a fly-by-night outfit or not because sometimes the names are so similar that you don't know whether you are dealing with Sunflight, Sun Tours or who, and you think well, yes, this sounds like a reputable company, I'll deal with it, and there's no protection whatsoever. I think that the Minister should look very seriously at the real estate mechanism and see whether in fact that it couldn't be applied to this particular case. I'm asking him to look at the Ontario legislation which I believe requires the registration and bonding of tour companies and travel agents, and I think that that's very similar to what we have in the real estate field and I'm pretty sure we must have had some bad experiences in the past — and I don't know how distant that past was — in the real estate area and the government acted and now we don't have any great problems and we have a lot of people having confidence in the real estate industry as a result.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Wolseley.

MR. ROBERT G. WILSON: Mr. Chairman, I had wanted to enter the debate in no particular manner, first when the Member for St. Johns spoke and then when the Member for St. Vital spoke because under research and planning they were sort of indicating that the department should shift off into a different direction dealing with retail food prices and the entire food policy.

However, I would like to deal with the Member for Transcona first because like Don Quixote he seems to be fighting windmills in this particular situation. He is dealing with a great deal of exaggeration because these things could never happen in the province of Manitoba because the industry itself has a policing mechanism. I do feel that what they could do, is they themselves and the Minister could get together and put out a pamphlet, and I'm not talking about an expensive pamphlet, or an advertising campaign to indicate that nobody in their right mind would ever pay for a trip in advance without getting the tickets. Now, that's buyer beware, because a booking fee is only required of a \$100.00. So, there seems to be some problem. The moral problem of the carrier, whether it be Transair or Air Canada, would be to gauge whether they would want to take Siddons on a complimentary trip because they certainly take enough politicians around the North American continent for free and other notable sports personalities and what have you, and they are always giving away sales incentive trips and what have you. So it would seem to me that I sympathize with the Member for Transcona's client or whatever that is looking for some remuneration, but I suggest that you're always going to have those people looking for a deal, and unfortunately I don't see anybody standing up today and asking what happened to the taxpayers of Manitoba when the former government went into the wholesale tour business and lost about \$250,000.00.

I remember when they were inviting all the American travel agents up here for free drinks and free food, called familiarization trips, and the American travel agents simply made the wholesale contacts, the contacts with the different individual sites, i.e. whether it was a fishing lodge or what have you, and they simply went back and put together their own packages, they didn't need the Manitoba government. So, hence the Manitoba government finally saw the light and got out of the wholesale travel business. Needless to say, the agent who they paid for his publication, to the tune of about \$60,000, and another Mr. Solmonson who got into the act, Thunderbird Travel ended up in Minneapolis and all those huge volumes and boxfuls of Manitoba tours were redundant because Thunderbird Tours together with the Manitoba travel tour business had tried to create a monopoly and unfortunately in this case, or fortunately in this case the marketplace went over, because the industry polices themselves, they have what they call, an IATA appointment, an ATC appointment

and an ATC appointment and I would suggest to the Member for Transcona that this outfit was a wholesaler. Normally you see a lot of this going on in the Eastern provinces where you have a lot of the foreign carriers who are very desperate to pick up business, but they very seldom filter on through into the west here, because the landing people, the land arrangement people haven't heard of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, so what happens when an agent or wholesaler from those particular prairie provinces come forward, they demand payment in advance or they demand at least half up front. There is a cancellation date that the carrier i.e. Transair, at least 30 days prior to departure has a cancellation date in which the plane is cancelled and no one loses any money. I would suggest that the investigation may reveal that this particular individual may have premeditatedly decided that it was time to get out of the wholesale business, and this is a very rare stamp in the travel industry.

So, I can't help but feel that the — out west here, I know the former Premier Schreyer told people not to take a holiday, and maybe if the Siddons had listened to him they wouldn't be out the money. But you know, on the serious side, it would seem to me that you've got a situation here that is not going to surface itself too often in Manitoba because of the fact that the travel industry in Manitoba . . . Air Canada has a monopoly here, the Winnipeg International Airport is no longer an international airport so to speak because Air Canada had such departure times that they've driven all the foreign carriers out, so, what you have is Air Canada controlling a monopoly with a few regional carriers and Frontier willing to take people to Las Vegas and some other areas and Transair is the biggest operator in this area in this local market.

So, I would suggest that the Siddons may approach Mr. Reimer and Transair and work at it from — possibly the Member for Transcona can assist them and even myself I would be able to, if they were to write me, add my name of support because I am galled at the number of people on freebees and Transair, or whoever the carrier is, can't pick up the Siddons' tab, to at least take them down there. Now, I don't know who they were dealing with with land arrangements, maybe one of the problems is that the wholesale package that the Siddons bought and very stupidly paid for without getting the tickets, maybe that particular land arrangement is non-existent. Maybe the destination is non-existent. What I mean by that is they may have been taking them to some place called the — well, Pere La Questa or something in Mexico, and maybe those people no longer have any dealings with any Canadian people. So, until I would know the destination of the person . . . For instance, if that trip, I don't know, maybe the Member for Transcona can tell me where their destination was, but if they were going for instance to Acapulco . . .

A MEMBER: Hawaii.

MR. WILSON: Hawaii, well, if they were going to Hawaii, I'm sure the Hawaiian Tourist Bureau would pick up their land arrangements, so the only person you need is CP Air or whoever the carrier was to pick up the tab. I would think that that problem can be solved, and I don't think it requires any more interference by government in the private sector. I think the experience of the former government going into the wholesale tour business, I think the experience of the former government trying to create a monopoly with Thunderbird Tours and paying for pamphlets that could have been printed for free if they'd have got together with the huge advertising budget of the carriers, like CP Air and Air Canada, all these were mistakes that the former government made and I don't think we should be making the same mistakes.

But, getting back to where I originally wanted to start and possibly to add something to the record for the Minister, the Member for St. Johns had said that in eight years he'd never been able to question the Minister, and I know that I certainly tried, and I wish the Member for St. Johns had been here to assist in drawing some of the questions of some of the former Ministers, whether it was Mr. Toupon or whoever, we would have been able to stop the duplication and the huge expansion of the new phenomena called the Consumers Bureau in the Province of Manitoba . Because it seemed to me we entered an era of an unbelievably rich and professional-type of approach to advertising consumer protection, were the Federal Government puts out a very inexpensive backgrounder called "What it is, What it does," telling the story of the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs federally, and then you look at the \$176.00 package that the former Minister, Mr. Toupin, put together and stood up in the House and bragged about; where there were cassettes, and he even alludes to it under the educational situation where they have a huge staff of civil servants running around to schools long before young people are entering the purchasing market; all of these things, it would seem to me, should be the responsibility of the Federal Government to fund.

In other words, either they are going to have this huge department in Ottawa called the Consumer and Corporate Affairs get into situations and look into the consumer education of everyone, or they are going to get into it and fund it, because what you are going to have then are situations where some provinces will go overboard in spending money to get into the school system and place this on the curriculum. I simply say, Mr. Minister, I hope it is discontinued because I think it has a very

Monday, June 5, 1978

limited value and I hope the Research and Planning people will support me in that area.

I quote from an article in which Mr. Toupin even indicated, once The Borrowers and Depositors Protection Act was proclaimed, that there would be a massive duplication of provincial credit lost on the books and federal duplication. One of the things that concerns me about Research and Planning is that they have all this legislation that they keep bringing forward but they don't ask the opinion, possibly, of the legal profession by a wide range. It seems that consumer protection laws have so many holes in them that they are like cheesecloth and are really a bonanza for lawyers to make fees. I would suggest that they should be in plain simple English so that everyone can understand them.

Regarding the Member for St. Vital — I can recall even myself today, after having spent a couple of years in opposition trying to figure out what the Consumers Bureau was doing — I find that he goes off into a concern all of a sudden about food prices. Well, I would suggest that this is a federal responsibility. Every time I would phone up with an increase in dog food or staples or I brought up questions of bread increases and what have you, it seemed that they would always get a provincial civil servant involved and I would end up somehow or other in Lakeview Square with the federal people.

So there is a question to ask and I don't profess to have the answer: Should the provincial people be monitoring food prices in their own bailiwick or their own province, or should we demand that the federal people set up a storefront operation that can be better identified so that the citizens of Manitoba don't have to go to the second, twelfth or seventeenth floor of a building in a back office to try to find some girl who is going to accept their complaint?

I took exception to the Member for St. Johns. I am delighted to take these consumer calls; I think MLAs could play a bigger part in getting involved in the day-to-day prices because one of the best non-civil servant people you have monitoring food prices are the housewives of the province who can tell you the different food prices around.

So basically I think the Member for St. Vital expressed a sincere concern. But I remember myself also in opposition and I think that Members of this Provincial Government and the Opposition should be apprised of what the Federal Consumer and Corporate Affairs does, so that when we look at expenditures under the Minister's budget, we are not suggesting duplication. I can't help but feel that we have to return a lot of these problems to the marketplace, and I can't help but think of where — I believe it is in one of these periodicals from the Federal Government, where they say they want to examine the role and make people aware of consumer problems. But then we get into a real expensive area where it is called, "Investigate changing market conditions." In other words, is the Minister's department heading into an area where, if we take over monitoring food prices, we are duplicating the role of the Federal Government? I think the Feds should be paying for this by means of transferring some to the Provincial Government; otherwise we should get out of it. And I think we have to have a storefront operation; I think we have to get out of the back rooms and be up front; I think the education of the public slowly to going to Kennedy Street is a good sign. I do feel that the placement of the advertising material leaves much to be desired. I can't help but feel under Research and Planning, that these Planning people should be saying that this advertising material should be in some of the retail stores rather than in lawyers' offices, because I have found in my experience many people working for the Consumer Bureau that are really just agents for Legal Aid — most of the problems, they say, simply require a legal opinion and so they recommend that the people go to Legal Aid. So it seems to me that if this material was available in the retail stores, a lot of these people could avoid expensive lawyers and things really can be arrived at by common sense and negotiation without expensive litigation.

Basically I think that the Minister should be looking at areas . . . One of the things that I didn't agree with the Member for Transcona on, while I am at it, is he wanted to set up a series of commissions and these, to me, well they are too expensive and really, what do they accomplish? If they are there to scare the industry and temporarily halt food price increases and what have you, I think there is a federal body that should be doing that. We should be asking for possibly a greater structure from them in the Manitoba area because there is no reason why the provincial people should be pushing the Feds out, they will be the first people who will just love to step aside and let you do all the work. I think they have an obligation to the consumers and I really welcome the area — when we are going to get some of this expensive labelling out of the way and we can deal with some of the products — where there will just basically be plain packaging which will get away from the The Federal Labelling Act. I know a fellow who had some problems with some anti-freeze not too long ago. If we had possibly got rid of this labelling problem, maybe we wouldn't have had to sell all those black beans to Cuba or wherever we sold them.

So I close with the comment that I hope the Minister's department continues to deal with awareness; continues to let the public know that he has a Consumers Bureau and Research and Planning section, and that it is located on Kennedy Street or wherever he intends to locate it. I think that we should slow down in spending more money in this area because I think the marketplace

takes care of it and I think the Federal Government will take care of the rest.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We are on 2.(b)(1), and we have been on this one item for more than two hours. The Minister.

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to respond briefly to the remarks of the Member for Wolseley. I'm not sure that I understand just exactly the point that he was making earlier on. I gather that he is concerned that there is a duplication of service between the Federal Department of Consumer Affairs and the provincial activities in this field and that he feels there may be some specific duplication in respect to the monitoring of food prices. This was a matter of some discussion earlier on when I explained to the committee that in conjunction with the provinces of Ontario and west, we were collaborating in monitoring 80 some particular food products and observing price fluctuations and combining operations in that respect. It may well be that there are areas of in which there is duplication between federal and provincial services being provided to the consumer. The member certainly takes a quite different tact than the Member for St. Johns who felt that because some services were providing benefits that a great deal more service would be warranted and that we could expect, by greatly expanding the sums voted for the operations of this department, to continue to provide additional services and to continue to get benefits that would be in some relationship to the additional expense which the taxpayers would have to accept.

I appreciate the Member for Wolseley's comments on the problems that exist now in the travel industry. We had discussed a variety of possibilities in respect to minimizing in the future a recurrence of the kind of thing that the Member for Transcona has described in such detail to us and one of those, of course, is legislation and another is a fund for compensation funded by the industry itself, somewhat of the nature of the legal society where losses occur to clients of lawyers in Manitoba, and the Society undertakes to compensate. This approach, I think, has been considered in B.C. and may now be operational and Ontario I'm told and there may be some answers to the problem in that general area.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Wolseley.

MR. WILSON: Well, just to continue in the travel area, it would seem to me that maybe unknown to members there's been a move by some of the large conglomerates, namely Power Corporation and others, to enter into the travel business and buy up all the IATA appointed agencies in certain towns, and so what you have, in Winnipeg you have Air Canada controlling most of the departures, you have the large conglomerates controlling most of the IATA appointed agencies, and so, therefore, you have a responsible corporate citizen who is going to be very very aware of any bad publicity. The key to it would be in the thing the Member for Transcona alluded to, in that, the buyer beware that he should be given some sort of education that he never never should ever pay for an entire trip in advance without getting a ticket for it. Even when you go and buy a Winesday ticket, you put up your dollar and you get your ticket. I think there is some education in the buyer-beware angle, but I called for restraint. In a period of restraint this is one area that I think that when governments have to look at cutting back that expensive awareness material can be replaced by less expensive material, that field trips can be looked at. In other words, I'm suggesting prioritizing the spending and when you talk about prioritizing the spending, then you have to look at some of the things that research and planning people may be planning for the future.

So, that is my concern that we don't go into any major food price inquiry, any major gasoline pricing and cement pricing and some of these other things. I think that if there's federal laws on the books . . . I can't help but think of a personal experience that I had and it's called misleading advertising. I wrote to the provincial body and they gave me the name of a gentleman, a Mr. Fredette, he's on Main Street, he's with the Marketing Practices of the Federal Government. However, a Mr. Bardzey of the provincial department took it upon himself to investigate the complaint. This I have no quarrel with except that the federal people also referred this to a Mr. Robidoux, or something. So, what I'm particularly saying is that if the misleading advertising is a federal responsibility, if food prices are a federal responsibility, I feel that the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs should simply be a forwarding agency to refer people into the right slot and, therefore, it would just seem to me . . . I can assure you what you're really doing, the consumer is making the . . . you never get any compensation, what you do is make the retail operation aware that you have let the government know and I think that some good can come out of any government agency being sort of a forwarding agency, receiving complaints and writing to the particular retail, letting them know that they're under observation, but I think expensive investigation and letter writing can best be served if it is left to the jurisdiction under which it falls, and if the Federal Government is ignoring Manitoba then I think it is incumbent upon us as government and myself as a member to get busy and to get after the Federal Government to recognize Manitoba. I note with interest that they had

Monday, June 5, 1978

Halifax and a number of other cities, and they completely ignored Manitoba when it came to the nighthawk flights and I think that as a consumer, the government should have said to the consumers, why aren't you being given this benefit, to be able to go and visit relatives in Vancouver, relatives in Toronto? As a result of our government making noises to the Federal Government Air Canada has reconsidered its position and CPR has reconsidered its position and it just takes an awareness on behalf of all the MLAs to force the Federal Government to get back and do the job of which they claim jurisdiction for. I hope my comments are not taken in the wrong vein, I just feel that if the Federal Government has a responsibility, let's see that they're doing the job.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Chairman, the Minister does not have a Legislative Assistant to him for Consumer Affairs — correct? Do you have a Legislative Assistant for Consumer Affairs?

MR. MCGILL: I was nodding my head in the affirmative, that is correct.

MR. PARASIUK: I really didn't want to pursue this matter that much further. I don't have any assurances yet from the Minister. He does have hopes, I hope his hopes are justified because I think the consequences to us all or to many people if they aren't would be pretty tragic. The Member for Wolseley has not provided any reassurance to me, however, in the short time he's spent dealing with the Siddon case, in fact he said if we pulled a few strings behind the scene maybe we could get some people to do something about it. That surely doesn't deal with the issue and he does agree that those people do have a problem and that other people in the future may have problems, but he didn't provide any solution that I think would be above-board in terms of dealing with this particular issue. I also take objection to the Member for Wolseley saying that I'm acting on behalf of a client and he used those specific words. I don't act for clients when I raise things in the Legislature. I deal with issues. If the member has clients when he raises issues in the Legislature, that's his problem, I certainly don't and I object to his stating that I'm acting on behalf of a client. I think that surely there are times when people can raise issues in the Legislature, and that's our proper function, not talking about clients and I take strong personal objection to that, but before I get too excited I reminded myself of the source, so I let it pass.

I think the Member for Wolseley does require some education about consumer protection and consumer education and what the jurisdiction of the Manitoba government is with respect to Consumer Affairs and what the jurisdiction of the Federal Government is with respect to Consumer Affairs, and I'm hoping that the Minister might just take a couple of minutes to indicate what is the jurisdiction of the Department of Consumer Affairs and specifically what is the jurisdiction of the Consumers Bureau. The Member for Wolseley seems to imply that they have no jurisdiction, leave it all to the Feds and that they should pack up their bags and close up shop and move over to the federal department. I don't see that, I think that the province does have a role with respect to consumer affairs. I think that the Consumers Bureau does have a role. I don't think it's all the federal responsibility, I think that there are companies which are incorporated in Manitoba, I think that there are other areas where the Manitoba government certainly does have responsibility, so I don't really want to pursue the issue that much further, but I do think it's important for the Minister to just give us a couple of statements of what the jurisdiction of his department in this particular branch is and does it have *raison d'être* because I think that's important. The last speaker said that really, in his estimation and he's been around here for some time, it doesn't have *raison d'être*, and surely there are areas where the provincial government does have the responsibility and does have the jurisdiction and I don't think it's valid to say, let the Feds do it. Now, am I correct in assuming this Mr. Minister?

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, there are areas, of course, where the local Department of Consumer Affairs, that is the Manitoba Department of Consumer Affairs has a very direct responsibility. The administration of The Consumer Protection Act in Manitoba comes directly under the provincial department; The Landlord and Tenant Act in its particular application provincially; The Personal Investigations Act, and so the administration and operation of these. But there are areas in which there's a federal and a provincial interest and it's not always possible to draw clear lines of definition. We tend to try to co-operate with the federal departments, to use their services to the best advantages and to be able to, in our way, provide input into the amount of information that they gather. So, certainly we do have a sphere and area of responsibility and action within Manitoba that would be very difficult at the present time to entirely translate to federal responsibility.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(b)(1)—pass; 2.(b)(2)—pass; 3. The Manitoba Gazette, 3.(a)(1)—pass; 3.(b)—pass; Resolution 31: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding

\$817,900—pass.

Under Resolution 32, 3.(a) Manitoba Gazette—pass; 3.(b) — the Member for Transcona.\$

MR. PARASIUUK: I just have a short question here. You explained in your introduction, and I checked this in Hansard, that the increase in Other Expenditures is attributable entirely to increased printing costs, is that correct?

MR. MCGILL: That is affirmative. The printing costs of the Gazette two years ago, as I mentioned, was \$69,600, and the cost for the past year, would be something like \$81,500, and the 1978-79 increase over the 1977-78 voted figure, is \$36,200.

MR. PARASIUUK: Now, do we tender at the beginning of the year and the bids come in. Would the figure of \$88,800 be firm since we should have had the bids in and checked?

MR. MCGILL: I don't think the total of \$88,800 is all on the tender. There are some other minor figures there.

MR. PARASIUUK: But it's basically quite firm?

MR. MCGILL: That's right.

MR. PARASIUUK: Okay.

MR. WILSON: I just wanted to make the comment that under the Manitoba Gazette, the Gazette seems to be used in a number of areas that leaves a lot to be desired, and I call it, "for consumer protection" in that under The Garage Keepers Act one of the requirements of the Act is that it has to be printed in the Manitoba Gazette. I notice a lot of the times, a lot of the iron from the towing companies, all these old cars that they have there, sometimes as many as 60 or 70 cars are printed in the Gazette, and yet there's nothing in the local dailies. It would seem to me that in a number of cases for instance, in the issue of June 3rd, I note with interest there's one where they just seems to put it in, and most of these particular vehicles are brought in, and I'm wondering if the planning and research people or the legal department could look at changing the definition to remove this requirement from the Manitoba Gazette and force them to put it in one of the Winnipeg dailies in a display section. I appreciate that the cost is only \$3.50 or something to put it in the Gazette versus about \$18.00 to put it in the Tribune or Free Press, but it would seem to me that it would convince the public, and possibly even the courts, that the greatest amount of exposure was done to ensure that the person so agreed was getting the maximum amount of money from his unit that is being sold under The Garage Keepers Act.

So, I say that it's specifically with cars that are towed away — a fellow goes on a sabbatical, a university professor leaves his car and somehow or other it is towed away for lane cleaning or whatever; he comes back from England after a year and finds that his car has been sold — and the only requirement was that the towing company who had been told to remove the car from the streets had taken it to his compound and had sold it under the Manitoba Gazette requirement of advertising these cars in the Gazette. So, I'm really wondering, the legal profession seems to look upon the Gazette as it's sort of bible where they can meet the requirements of certain statutes and I'm glad the Attorney General's here, he might want to look at the possibility of getting some of these requirements out of the Gazette — which I say has a limited circulation — and into the public dailies as a requirement of part of the legislation, because it would offer fairness. I think part of the Consumer Minister's role might be to look at the role of the Gazette pertaining to the requirements of what it's really hoping to accomplish.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, The Garage Keepers Act requires certain notices to be posted in respect to financial activities of this type within the Manitoba Gazette. The member is not convinced that the circulation of the Gazette is sufficiently wide. That would require amendment to the Act in order to change the specification now that requires this notice to publish in the Gazette. This is normally where legal notices are posted and where they are looked for by people who are directly concerned. The cost of this is borne by the people who post the notices, and it's additional volume in bulk in terms of the size of the Gazette but revenues are obtained in order to offset that additional cost.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 3.(b)—pass; Resolution 32: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum

not exceeding \$106,600—pass.

Item 4. Securities Commission, 4.(a) — the Member for Wolseley.

MR. WILSON: I wondered if the Minister could tell me if at any time that the Securities Commission staff borrows other members of his department and staff to conduct undercover work either in conjunction with the RCMP or on their own? By that I mean, is that Mr. Walker and the other gentlemen over there, if they are sort of pressed to meet a deadline on a particular securities investigation, do they have the ability to seek help from the RCMP or do they use Consumer Bureau staff? By that I mean officers of the Consumer's Bureau, are they taken away from their role as protecting the consumer to do undercover work for the Securities Commission?

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, to the Member for Wolseley, I am informed that it is not usual practice to borrow staff from other areas in the department to assist the Securities Commission in any of its special functions. There was however, I believe, one particular case where one person from the Consumer's Bureau was used to provide some additional support service for the Securities Commission in one particular instance, but normally this is not regularly resorted to by the Securities Commission which retains its own staff for the purposes of its activities.

MR. WILSON: So, it is possible that if a certain person in one of the other departments had an expertise in a certain area that the Securities Commission could borrow this person to perform certain duties for the Securities Commission that he otherwise might be performing for say the Consumer's Bureau?

MR. MCGILL: I am informed that that happened on one particular instance but is not regularly done

MR. WILSON: I see.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Chairman, is this the body that would look into whether Jarmoc had used the name Jarmoc Incorporated illegally?

MR. MCGILL: I think the answer to that is no. There is no particular problem relating to securities.

MR. PARASIUK: Which body would be doing it then? Where could I ask that question?

MR. MCGILL: Yes. I rather feel that perhaps we went by that under I.(c), Administrative Services and Companies or Corporations Branch. That would be normally the area in which matters of search would be undertaken. I think the member is referring to the particular instance of the use of the title "Limited", and an effort was then made by the Corporations Branch to determine what authority, if any, Mr. Jarmoc had in this respect. I believe that investigation is continuing.

MR. PARASIUK: So, I could ask questions when we come to the Minister's Salary, I could raise these questions again on this.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 4.(a)—pass; 4.(b)—pass; Resolution 33: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$400,000—pass.

5. Public Information Services. 5.(a)—pass; 5.(b)—pass — the Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: Yes, I would like to know whether in fact this branch was involved in producing tap e, audio or photographic material that normally would be produced by the media for some type of press coverage or media coverage? Does it normally do that or does it produce material which the media can have access to, but it doesn't specifically develop programs for the media?

MR. MCGILL: I am advised, Mr. Chairman, that two years ago this information branch did do some production of programs for the department of agriculture, but this in recent months has not been an activity undertaken by the Information Services.

MR. PARASIUK: So it did some material for the Department of Agriculture The Department of Agriculture had some long experience — yes, has been involved for a long time in producing programs for public consumption I think through the CBC and other stations, as is the Department of Education, but other than that, I don't think this branch does provide any leg work for the media. The reason why I'm asking the question, Mr. Chairman, is that the TaskForce Report says that this

Monday, June 5, 1978

branch is producing tap e, audio or photographic material that normally would be produced by the media. It then goes on to say that there somehow should be some reduction if the branch didn't do this anymore. I'm not aware of the branch doing anything special in producing tap e, audio or photographic material that normally would be produced by the media. Now, if I'm mistaken in that respect, perhaps the Minister can tell me — that's why I'm asking the question, whether it in fact is producing any such material that the Task Force claims it is.

MR. MCGILL: Well, we are getting back into an area of . . .

MR. PARASIUK: No, it has nothing to do with the recommendation, it has to do with a matter of fact.

MR. MCGILL: Well, then I can just merely say that the information I have is that some work of this type was done approximately two years ago, producing video and tapes that could be used by the media. This has not been done during the last 12 months, not of that particular concern.

MR. PARASIUK: Okay, so that means then that my understanding, and the Minister's understanding is correct, and I assume then that the Task Force didn't, as they haven't with a number of other departments, consult in that deep a manner with the department itself to find out the correct facts before they put material into a public document which is incorrect factually. Therefore, since this branch is providing a normal on-going service, does it expect to get into the field of producing tape, audio, photographic material that normally would be produced by the media? Does it expect to get into that field?

MR. MCGILL: We would see no advantage to producing material of that type, that as you say, would normally be produced by the media. We would not want to usurp the function of the media and their financial responsibility for that and transfer it to . . .

MR. PARASIUK: So, none of the money requested in Resolution 34 then is foreseen to be used for the purposes of producing tape, audio or photographic material that would normally be produced by the media. You are going to carry on your normal job as you have in the past. You don't foresee any great changes. So, this is what the Estimate is for, just the normal on-going pass function, and I guess it will be a continuing function of information services as described on No. 5 I guess, appropriation No. 5.

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, we would exercise our normal cautious and careful expenditure of the taxpayers' money, and permit the media to pay for those things which they normally would pay for.

MR. PARASIUK: Yes.

MR. WILSON: Mr. Chairman, I wondered, under this section, last year I asked the former Minister of Consumer Affairs, approximately is this the area that covers government photographs being taken? Is this the area?

MR. MCGILL: That is correct.

MR. WILSON: Last year — I stand to be corrected — it seemed to me that the government photographers had taken something like 40,000 photographs and in light of the Member for Transcona, I almost rose on a point of privilege when he said the Task Force is incorrect. I suggest that the Task Force is in many areas exceptionally correct in their findings and it would seem to me that I possibly, and Public Accounts, can look at some of these photographs and say, "Was this exercise necessary?" Because I went over to investigate the Member for Elmwood and found that he had taken an excess of pictures of himself and it seemed to me that in many cases pictures of hockey teams from Elmwood and pictures of paintings and pictures of the Member for Burrows getting his sketch done at the Sketch Club; these all seemed to me to have absolutely no bearing on Public Information Services.

In other words, what I am saying is that the time possibly has arrived, in a period of restraint, where we should ask, would the media buy this picture, would you pay to have this picture developed? What I am possibly suggesting is maybe the Minister would like to indicate that maybe this year only 30,000 pictures will be taken rather than 40,000 because it seems to me that I was shocked when I looked at the degree of picture taking under the former government who said that they stood

Monday, June 5, 1978

for restraint and for helping the little guy out. If the media is paying for these, that's fine, but if the taxpayer is paying for them to the tune of \$424,100, then as a member of Public Accounts, I would hope that the Cabinet would look at cutting back on the number of pictures being taken. I especially quarrel with members of the Treasury Bench of the former NDP Government who seemed to be almost insisting that their pictures be taken to a degree that bordered on conceit. I really will intend to bring this forward in Public Accounts but I wanted to put it on the record, if it is under this section, that I am advocating a reduction in the amount of pictures being taken.

I might say that during the session, I would hope that the Public Information Services, and I don't want to be too thrifty, but it seems to me I would better have my Public Information Services' document during the session left in my box rather than delivered three or four days late by our very questionable Post Office. I just draw that for the members' attention. Many of these have to go out to far-reaching points in the country and it would seem to me that during the session, the Information Services' bulletins could be left in the Legislature and put some of our messengers to work delivering them to the individual MLAs.

MR. MCGILL: Well, Mr. Chairman, the Member for Wolseley has mentioned the number of photographs taken last year. My information is that there were 41,800 prints made, but that of course is not anywhere near the number of actual work orders. There might be a number of prints made of one particular photograph that was taken, and these are of course for a variety of reasons. The Information Services Act says the photographer is for the Fire Commissioner's office, for instance, for the Archives, for the records, for every department of government, and also for insurance purposes, many photographs are required.

So while the number of prints is quite impressive, the number of work orders that would involve would be considerably less. For instance, the Department of Continuing Education in one work order asked for a series of pictures showing classroom, workshop, and laboratory activities together with outside shots of the building. There were shots taken at three Community Colleges for advertising in brochures. So this is the function, then, and while there may be pictures taken of individuals and so forth, I would suspect that the major portion of it is in connection with these other continuing responsibilities to provide a photographic record of various types of departmental responsibility.

MR. WILSON: Then is the Minister suggesting that future policies might indicate that even though there were 41,800 prints taken, that if a particular member — like I had to do on City Council — if I was at the opening of a community club and a photographer was handy, I would then visit, in this case the Norquay Building, and pick out one of the prints and pay for it myself. Is this the general practice? What I am suggesting is that it would seem to me that if an MLA knew that the government was taking 41,000 prints and he attended the opening of a particular power plant in the north, I might want a particular print of that because the expense of my going up there, I think this could be an invaluable service from the point of view of if MLAs could buy these prints, then that would be a distinct advantage.

The thing that I took exception to, and as a member of Public Accounts it is my responsibility to examine the expenditures of the former government — unfortunately the Member for Elmwood raised a little bit of the inquisitive nature of myself and I decided to look up some of the pictures that he had taken. I found that some of them were absolutely so far removed from government activity that I wonder who monitors what is a government activity? I am suggesting — I know the Minister is very busy — but I am suggesting some time he might want to apprise himself of the terms of reference of the government photographers. I appreciate the fellow is up against — possibly in the case of the former NDP Government — he is up against a peculiar individual who wants his picture taken all the time, and he is up against not wanting to tell the boss, well, I'm under a restraint, I can only take three rolls of film.

So I would be interested, as a member of Public Accounts, for the future expenditures of government, under what obligation is the photographer to try to give the taxpayers full value for their money? I understand that those photographs of the Legislative Assembly were a complete bust because of the nature of the Chamber and that they may have to be redone again with rented or borrowed equipment. I am suggesting that civil servants should be given the freedom to speak up, and that if the workmanship may not come out in a particular fashion which may be acceptable to members, then maybe they shouldn't proceed with the exercise in the first place.

So I'll wrap it up by just saying that under the former government, if they had 40,000 prints taken, I can assure the Minister that my limited investigation with the time at my disposal, has indicated that many of these photographs leave a lot to be desired and many of them certainly fall under the question of what do the government photographers have to take pictures of. Are they at the beck and call of a particular Minister or MLA or at their own discretion as to what is good taste?

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, the department responds to Ministers on official business if they request a photographic record. That is the extent of the involvement of the department in terms of individuals and their activities. The member mentioned the possibility that he might want a print of a particular occasion or event at some northern Manitoba point or wherever, those would be supplied to an MLA if he asked for one print of that for his own purposes. I believe they are available from time to time to the public on a repayment basis, additional prints of photographs that have been taken. In general terms, the policy is for photographs to be taken at the request of a Minister when he is on official government business.

MR. WILSON: What would the safeguard be for the taxpayers of Manitoba — for instance, I'll take the Member for Elmwood. In the Public Works file there are many interesting pictures there, but the ones of the Elmwood hockey team . . .

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

MR. PARASIUK: I would like to ask the member where he got access to files in the Department of Public Works? Are these files that are contained in the Ministry of Consumer Affairs and Internal Services? If he did get access to these files, how did he get access to them? We received a letter last fall from the Minister of Finance indicating that the Member for Wolseley had illegally broken into files last year and he said that he had sent out a letter to everyone indicating —(Interjection)— That's pretty accurate, when that guy does that. I would like to know whether in fact he is continuing to do that. I would like to know what he has broken into to get access to those files.?

MR. CHAIRMAN: On the same point of order, the Member for Wolseley.

MR. WILSON: I think the Member for Transcona again is chasing windmills and acting like Don Quixote because absolutely I take exception to the words "break in." I asked for permission to look at a particular thing. For instance, I can't go around here and examine 200 oil paintings. I'll tell you what, Nixon didn't destroy the tapes and the Member for Elmwood didn't destroy his photographs, so I have a right to look at them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: I would like the Minister to confirm who gave access to the Member for Wolseley to look into departmental files? Now, if that has been given, fine, but I would like to know whether in fact we will now have the right to look at the Premier's files with respect to his publicity. I understand that the Information Services Branch arranges the press conferences for the Premier. There is a cost attached to that. Are we going to be provided those types of files; are we going to be provided all of the personal photographs that the Premier takes? I would just like to know what rules we are operating under.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister.

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, to the Member for Transcona, it has been regular policy of the Information Services Branch to permit members to look at negatives that are filed by a department. There are no departmental files that are available for perusal by people without special authority. So the Member for Wolseley may be referring to filed negatives under a particular department and I believe those are and have been available for perusal by Members of the Legislature.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Wolseley.

MR. WILSON: Mr. Chairman, I would respectfully suggest that the Member for Transcona is equally a member of Public Accounts. I realize he wants to come to the defence because next year . . . This year we are dealing with the — just to wrap this up — this year we are dealing . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would ask the Member for Wolseley if he would stay to the Public Information Services.

MR. WILSON: All right. Under the Public Information Services, there are 41,800 prints taken. I simply ask the Minister if he can consider cutting that number down, based on the fact that my limited perusal as a member of Public Accounts examining the expenditures of the former government would indicate that some of these pictures left something to be desired as to importance to the taxpayers

Monday, June 5, 1978

of Manitoba, and also if some of them didn't border on excessive use by former members of the NDP and the use of photographs been taken. I will be very kind, because I simply say that if one who is a member of Public Accounts knows that Public Information Services has 41,000 prints . . . As a member of City Council, I can go to the Mayor's office any time and say, "What did you have taken of the Pan Am Games?" — he will haul out a drawer with the Pan Am Games and I can look at the negatives or whatever that happen to be under Pan Am Games. So if the Member for Transcona wants to look at Premier Schreyer when he was at the power dam in Gillam, I am sure that that request would be adhered to. I stand to be corrected.

MR. MCGILL: Well, the member requests that we exercise some restraint in the number of prints that are produced annually. I would tell him that in the last seven, eight months, there has been some examination of this and there is some reduction now under way in the number of prints and this is a matter of judgment as to which events are a merit in terms of importance, a photographic record being kept. Again, we have simply asked the department to use careful judgment in the number of events that are covered. Certainly this is under consideration.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Transcona on the Public Information Services.

MR. PASIUK: Yes, I'd like to know whether in fact the Minister is going to stop sending us press releases to our home or whether he's just going to send them around to our pigeon-holes here in the Legislative Building. It was a question that was asked specifically by the Member for Wolseley, is the Minister going to do that?

MR. MCGILL: Well, Mr. Chairman, it's a matter of complexity as to changes and modification of the mailing systems. When changes are made responses are always, or frequently received by people who feel abused by the fact that they are not receiving information that they previously received. We try to be as careful and economical in the volume of bulletins that are sent out, but at the same time we would like to provide those to people who use them regularly and who have become accustomed to this kind of regular information on government programs.

MR. PARASIUK: I can't agree with the Minister's answer. Does the branch still intend to put on organized and coordinated the press conferences for the Premier of Manitoba, or is it the intention to discontinue those and just leave it uncoordinated?

MR. MCGILL: I think the policy that has been in effect for 20 years or so in that respect will continue, that the press conferences will be arranged and carried out with some supervision by the Information Services.

MR. PASIUK: Again I agree with the Minister, I think that's a wise decision and I'm glad he's not following some of the advice of some of his colleagues. Is it the intent of the branch to still send out photographers if there is say, the opening of a power dam in northern Manitoba, or you name it, where there may be an absence of photographers locally to provide that type of photographic coverage or other type of media coverage for this event? This is usually done by Information Services and brought back so that people will have access to it. I think that the number of shots or negatives that are taken is usually left to the professional judgment of the photographer

If anyone's been involved as I think you have, as the Minister has, and as I have, in a political campaign where people want to get photographs for a pamphlet, or what have you, you're going to find that there are tons of negatives that are taken, unfortunately, and that's sometimes frustrating. But at the same time I think that's left to the professional judgment of the photographer because you can have a sun spoil, you can have a number of things which could hurt that negative. You might come back from Sundance or from Limestone, after having sent a photographer up there and if he only takes two negatives you're in tough shape if they haven't turned out. So that's why a photographer tends to take a number of negatives and I think that's done professionally. Does the Minister intend to continue that sane and rational policy, or will he listen to the other advice of the Member for Wolseley?

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, I just repeat that the policy to respond to a request of a Minister who is, in his judgment, feels that a photographic record should be kept of his government activities, these requests will be responded to, this policy has not been changed.

As to the number of shots taken, we rely on the skill of the photographer involved and the greater the skill probably the more economical he can be in terms of numbers. This will be done as economically as possible, where it may be cheaper to use photographic skills that are on site. We may be able to achieve what records we feel need to be kept by contracting for them, but otherwise

the specific request of the Minister to cover government business or government activities, will be responded to.

MR. PARASIUK: Well, I'd like to thank the Minister for his comments because often when people come along and try and take, what I'd call, cheap shots at past Ministers because they think it's an easy and quick thing to do, what they're really doing is if they knew their facts, they aren't knocking the past Minister, they're knocking the technical staff involved.

I know that in the case of Public Information Services that a full set of professional judgments have been made in the past. —(Interjection)— I would expect that the same quality of professional judgments will be made in the future. Those professional judgments are sane, they're defensible and I commend this branch for its past work and I assume it will be doing good quality work in the future.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 5.(b)—pass. Resolution 34: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$424,100 —pass. Resolution 35, Item 6 on page 20, Public Utilities Board, 6.(a) — the Member for St. Vital.

MR. WALDING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just had a question too for the Minister on the Public Utilities Board. I note from the board's annual report, and it's on a calendar year basis, that there is a fairly substantial return to the board and I presume that these are fees charged to applying agencies to the board. Can the Minister confirm this please?

MR. MCGILL: I'm advised that this recovery is, in part, in the nature of fees and in part a charge-back of costs of conducting the hearings during the research that is involved in hearing the case at that level.

MR. WALDING: Since the annual report was on a calendar year basis and this amount for the last year of \$339,000 is on a fiscal year basis, can the Minister assure the committee that the amounts collected by the board covered the appropriation that we approved for last year?

MR. MCGILL: Well, it's difficult under the terms that the board operates and the length of some of the hearings on the extension of one hearing from one year to another, either fiscal or calendar, to determine and to exactly have a complete recovery in each period. But the intent and objective, of course, is to buy fees and charge-back of costs to recover as much as possible of the total expense of providing this service by the Public Utilities Board. I'm advised that approximately 94 percent of non-salary costs are now recovered, which is a pretty reasonable recovery.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, what does the Minister mean by salary costs in there? Is he talking about the salaries of the board itself, or its staff ?

MR. MCGILL: I'm talking about the board staff only in terms of salary. Non-salary recoveries amount to 94 percent. In other words, Mr. Chairman, the board is not self-supporting, but it does recover a majority of the non-salary costs associated.

MR. WALDING: Then I would ask the Minister, is it a matter of policy that the board is not self-supporting ? Is consideration being given to prorating salary costs to applicant agencies to the board?

MR. MCGILL: Well, I'm advised that some salary costs are pro-rated. But there, in some instances, is not a specific agency to which salary costs could be allocated and so there will be and continues to be a non-recovery in terms of salaries. There's not always a precise situation in every hearing where one particular agency is responsible for or should be charged with all of the costs including salaries that are involved.

MR. WALDING: One further question, Mr. Chairman, and the Minister might want to take it as notice, but could the Minister tell me what the charge was to the Manitoba Telephone System by the Public Utilities Board in respect to its application for a rate revision about 18 months ago?

MR. MCGILL: I'm advised, Mr. Chairman, that that information is not immediately available, that that can be provided. It occurred and it was undertaken prior to the time of the present Chairman on the Public Utilities Board, so this would require some research.

MR. WALDING: I realize, Mr. Chairman, that it was a very lengthy procedure. There was a number of hearings and then an interim award and then further investigation hearings and a final award, and I suppose there was a certain time after that before the final costs could be assessed, but if I could get an idea of the final figure at some time, please.

MR. MCGILL: Yes, we'll attempt to get that. I'm sure we can obtain the information.

MR. WALDING: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 6.(a)—pass — the Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: I'd like to ask the Minister whether it's his intention to insure that consumer groups appearing before the Public Utilities Board have adequate counsel ?

MR. MCGILL: Well, Mr. Chairman, some groups do appear before the Public Utilities Board, I am told, and if there is some lack of experience on the part of the groups or their counsel, that the board itself will endeavour to assist them in presenting their arguments and their cases adequately to the board.

MR. PARASIUK: Specifically, Mr. Chairman, when Hydro appeared before the Public Utilities Board, there was a consumer group that had legal counsel there and legal counsel was provided by Legal Aid, and I wasn't at the hearings myself, I just read the press reports on this matter. But it strikes me that Hydro itself had legal counsel. I think the Public Utilities Board had legal counsel. Unless the press reports were biased, it would appear to me from the press reports that the Legal Aid lawyer representing the consumer group actually did provide a useful function in the deliberations. Now, I'm just taking this from the press reports. I wasn't there personally to make any judgments on it and I don't want to put the staff in the position of having to make judgments on it, but in the light of the past experience in this respect, does the Minister think that it is useful to have consumer groups, if they wish to go before Public Utilities Board hearings, with respect to changes in utility pricing especially. If they are in a position whereby they can't afford adequate legal counsel, would the Minister advise the Attorney-General that he should ensure that Legal Aid would be made available to these groups if in fact they qualify for Legal Aid in income terms?

MR. MCGILL: Well, Mr. Chairman, I am sure that if they indeed qualify under the present arrangements for Legal Aid assistance, that that would be provided consistent with the ability of the Department of the Attorney-General to respond to the request. But certainly, as you point out, in this instance there was assistance given to the consumer group that appeared before the Public Utilities Board and I believe that it was Legal Aid assistance.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Chairman, the reason why I raise this particular issue is that there has been some talk about preventing Legal Aid lawyers from providing this type of assistance to consumer groups. I gather from the Attorney-General that it is left to the discretion of the Executive Director as to whether Legal Aid assistance to consumer groups appearing before a public tribunal will in fact be provided. Is that correct? Am I correct in saying that; I'm asking the Attorney-General.

The reason why I am raising that, Mr. Chairman, is that the Executive Director of Legal Aid may in fact have budgetary problems or a whole set of pressures on him to possibly cut back his budget and he may in fact not be that well-acquainted with the particular case coming before, say, the Public Utilities Board. In those instances, does the Minister intend to rely solely upon the judgment of the Executive Director of Legal Aid in determining whether in fact a consumer group will have adequate legal counsel, or will he in fact turn to the department for some advice in this respect because I think there might be some instances where I think it probably would be a good thing to have a consumer group represented by adequate legal counsel. I would hope that the Minister of Consumer Affairs in this sense just won't sort of pass the buck and leave it solely to the discretion of the Executive Director of Legal Aid. I would hope that he would take a look at these decisions, review them and determine whether in fact — or advise the Minister as to whether in fact he thinks these consumer groups, in a particular hearing, should have representation. I know this is somewhat hypothetical but at the same time I think the situation may arise in the future and I would hope that if that does arise, some of us probably will be contacting not only the Attorney-General but the Consumer Affairs Minister as well.

So I am just raising this possibility with the Minister. I know that there is concern and yet it strikes me that the performance of the Legal Aid lawyers to date before these tribunals has been quite good. But, again, I can only make my judgments from the press reports. Does he have any comment on this particular matter, which I think is an issue?

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, the matter of the policy of Legal Aid with respect to providing such assistance is not my responsibility so when he suggests that he hopes I won't pass the buck in this respect, I don't think it is properly described as passing the buck when one clearly makes it known that the matter of the terms of reference of the Legal Aid Department are under the Attorney-General. On that policy will depend largely the availability and on the numbers of staff available. Largely it will depend on what responses are made to consumer groups who request such aid. But in instances, as I mentioned before, where no professional assistance is being demonstrated by groups appearing before the Public Utilities Board, the staff of the board has been helpful in advising them how they may best present their arguments before the board and in helping them through that problem. But, again, as to the assistance that Legal Aid may be granted, I am not going to presume to comment on what should be the policy of the Attorney-General in respect to the provision of Legal Aid for groups which apply.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Chairman, I would like to apologize to the Minister if in fact I gave him the impression that I was criticizing him for not making decisions outside of his jurisdiction. I didn't explain myself properly when I made my point.

If the Minister is saying, and if the Minister of Consumer Affairs is saying that the consumers of Manitoba, or consumer groups appearing before tribunals, will indeed have adequate representation or counsel, then the Minister can try and ensure that that is done through Legal Aid. If it is not done through Legal Aid, the Minister still has the power to provide that counsel directly, although I assume it might be more efficient to do so through the Legal Aid system, but presumably the Minister would be in a position to provide that assistance directly to a group if the Executive Director of Legal Aid decided, for whatever reason, that Legal Aid would not be providing legal counsel to a consumer group. Isn't that correct, you still do have the power to provide direct legal counsel to a consumer group appearing before a tribunal?

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, the member may presume what he feels he would like to presume in this respect. I can tell him that I have no intention of setting up another Department of Legal Aid until much greater need for such a move would have to be demonstrated. I think we have a Department of Legal Aid and it would be normal to expect services to be provided, as required, through that agency and not to set up for each department its own particular Legal Aid branch.

MR. PARASIUK: Okay, so what you are saying, then, that you rely in the first instance on Legal Aid to provide counsel and you'll cross the bridge when you come to it if Legal Aid doesn't provide the counsel but we don't have the experience to go on. I'll leave it at that, and I'm just saying that I might come back to it some time in the future on this particular issue.

While I have the floor, I wanted to raise a fairly trivial issue regarding the Public Utilities Board — I know that utilities appear before it for rate increases — I'm wondering whether in fact the question of — it is a very minor question but it is a ticklish question — of the rental of equipment by utilities to individuals comes under the Public Utilities Board as well. Specifically, the Greater Winnipeg Gas Company rents out home heaters. People pay monthly rental on their home heaters and they assume that they have a repair warranty on that home heater — or the water heater, the hot water heater — for as long as they are paying rent. I have tried to do some exploration with respect to a couple of constituency complaints. It appears that there is a 10-year warranty and that somehow after that, the warranty doesn't seem to hold true. I will be pursuing this further myself, but I am just going to ask the chairman of the Utilities Board, indirectly, through the Minister, whether in fact this is something that does fall under the Public Utilities Board or is it something removed from the aegis of the Public Utilities Board and is something to be bargained between the utility and the individual in terms of rates of rental of hot water heaters, warranty provisions, repair provisions and that type of thing, new equipment?

MR. MCGILL: Well, I gather from the chairman that the question is a complicated one and the problems immediately surfacing relate to warranties on these tanks by the manufacturers to the utilities providing them. The question now has come down perhaps to a lack of time in the warranty that will be guaranteed by the manufacturer and in turn the then inability of the public utility to take on that kind of a warranty claim that would be necessary in terms of rental rates of these. I am further advised and reminded that of course the manufacturer is quite frequently beyond the jurisdiction of the Public Utilities Board so it becomes a rather tenuous kind of control situation.

MR. PARASIUK: I'll pass on that and maybe I'll deal directly with either the chairman or some

Monday, June 5, 1978

staff that he might designate, because it is a technical matter, but I am not in any position to offer any advice at all to the constituent who comes before me somewhat confused and somewhat perplexed, because it is a complicated area and I would like to get my facts down completely correctly before I give him any advice.

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, perhaps a written request to the Board would receive a response by the engineering advice they have available.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Selkirk.

MR. PAWLEY: The questions that I was going to ask have been pretty well covered by the Member for Transcona.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 6.(a)—pass — the Member for St. Vital.

MR. WALDING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to ask the Minister, at some time if he could give me an explanation, because I don't understand the situation fully, of the application by the cable companies to the Public Utilities Board. I understand that the government made a policy decision in the matter of a referral there. I note that MTS will be back before the Public Utilities Committee tomorrow morning and if the Minister wishes to defer the matter until then when the cable experts are present, I will bring up the matter again.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister.

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, it might be inappropriate at this time to get into this. I am advised that the matter is still before the courts and it might be somewhat inappropriate to discuss the matter in any detail at this time. The courts did rule; I understand an appeal is in progress and so I would hesitate, because of it being *sub judice* to comment on the matter at this time.

MR. WALDING: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 6.(a)—pass; 6.(b)—pass. Resolution 35: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$385,500—pass.

Item 7 - Queen's Printer: 7.(a)—pass; 7.(b)(1)—pass; 7.(b)(2)—pass; 7.(b)(3)—pass; 7.(c)—pass; 7.(d)(1)—pass; 7.(d)(2)—pass; 7.(d)(3)—pass; 7.(d)(4)—pass?

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister would explain the reduction in that last item, as to what has taken place.

MR. CHAIRMAN: On 7.(d)(4)?

MR. USKIW: Yes, a \$300,000 reduction. Is there anything in particular?

MR. CHAIRMAN: On the Recoverables, the Minister.

MR. MCGILL: This is a matter of recoverable and is made up of a variety of some reductions

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution 36, Queen's Printer: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$214,800—pass.

Item 8. Rent Stabilization, 8.(a) — the Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Chairman, I wasn't in the House on Thursday, June 1st, when the whole matter of the dismissal of Vivian Rosenberg was discussed. I have read through Hansard, and I find that the explanation is not that clear from the Minister and I would like to ask him some questions on this matter. He indicates in a sense, Miss Rosenberg, is over-qualified for the position and that somehow that task can now be performed by someone who has less experience and less authority at present than she herself has. Now, I don't think that's true in the light of facts, and the facts are that there is a phase four to the rent review program, that that phase may be superseded by a phase five because I don't know if it is definite that phase four is the last phase completely of that particular program. The program is still, I think, in its very early stages. I think there's a lot of flushing out of the phase four program to be done. I can recall from personal experience that Mrs. Rosenberg proved very adept at flushing out the original Rent Stabilization Program, that she

built up the staff, that she's administered it, that there have been some reductions in the staff. The Minister points out that the staff has performed more efficiently by phasing work through the peaks and valleys, or phasing staff through the peaks and valleys of work. It strikes me that all that reflects well on the director, and I find it rather strange that the reward for a director who has performed his or her task very well, and who is on a leave of absence from a permanent Civil Service position, would be to be laid off and put in some type of re-deployment pool that hasn't worked particularly well for other people. It strikes me that this is not going to do the morale of the Civil Service any good. I don't think it's going to do the morale of the program any good and I think it also puts the entire program in some grave jeopardy. So, I would ask for an explanation of, in a sense the termination of Mrs. Rosenberg, and an explanation as to what the future plans are for her because I think that he does have some responsibility for her in that I think that she has been a trusted and a valuable staff member of his over the last seven months.

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, we had many questions in respect to the termination of this contract, or the non-renewable of the contract. It was a matter of advising Mrs. Rosenberg that the contract would not be renewed at the conclusion of the current period. I tried to explain to the House that in reviewing the function and the role of the department for phase four and the kinds of cases that would likely constitute the major role of the review agency and the stabilization board, we undertook to simply review the structure of the review agency, and we noted that there were three senior people and a staff of approximately 20 people who were in the review agency.

As the member points out, Mrs. Rosenberg was involved in the organization and starting up of this branch, because she had particular qualifications in respect to organization, and I'm advised, although it was not in my period of experience, that she responded to this responsibility and the starting up period was accomplished and the recruiting and the bringing together of people to operate this review agency was done by Mrs. Rosenberg.

In the periods now coming up, that of course, skill in terms of organizing and so forth, is not so much in demand as is the perhaps accounting and background in economic matters, so, we felt that we could perhaps best respond to what we considered to be the kind of caseload for the future by retaining people with more those qualifications than the executive skills which Mrs. Rosenberg brought to the early period of the rent review agency. I have communicated that to Mrs. Rosenberg, and we hope that there will be alternative opportunities for her to bring those skills to bear, but it was essentially a matter of employing and utilizing the people available in the areas which they would likely be in the greatest demand. We are through the organizing part, we are into the routine of handling complaints and we look to now the reorganized structure to respond adequately to that requirement. We are looking too at the Stabilization Board to determine if some change could be made there to perhaps bring in some experience and knowledge in landlord-tenant relationships, anticipating that there may be more matters involving the landlord and the tenant, and the part of the program that now involves the decontrol of rental accommodation that is voluntarily vacated. So, these are matters which my department has had under review, and we are taking what steps we feel are best designed to respond to the future requirements in that area.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Chairman, the organizational tasks required with the Rent Stabilization Program were completed about a year or a year and a half ago. So that means that Mrs. Rosenberg has been running the operations of the Rent Stabilization Program in a way in which has been satisfactory to the people that advise the Minister, and the Minister confirmed that in his previous comments. That means then, there's a hole in the Minister's explanation as to why, in fact, she is being terminated after having performed her job very very well. The task that's at hand is one of running an organization of 20 people at present, I assume, and I'll be asking some questions in detail about the complement of the Rent Stabilization Program, organizing that and organizing the various procedures that the Rent Stabilization Program requires. Now that requires a skill in management.

Now, we have people who have background in economic matters. The Minister indicated earlier today that the people in the Research and Planning Branch are involved in part with the work of the Rent Stabilization Program. You undoubtedly have accountants who are involved in the program itself, some of the board members had backgrounds in economics and accounting. I'm not sure whether in fact the board membership has been changed. I've not seen anything in this respect, but maybe they have, but I see no valid reason for terminating Mrs. Rosenberg.

The Minister has obviously the final decision there, but I think in so doing he should do so in a fair manner, and a mannei that's consistent with, I think, generally accepted public and private administration, and it strikes me that what you don't do is take someone who has done a job very successfully, and in a sense fire her, because although the contract runs out on June 30th, the program is continuing and therefore it would be logical to assume 999 times out of 1,000 that the

Monday, June 5, 1978

contract would be renewed. This is that 1 in 1,000 times when it isn't, and I think that the Minister hasn't provided a sufficient explanation for that termination. He also hasn't indicated what will be done with respect to the re-deployment of Mrs. Rosenberg. Will she be re-deployed within his department? Is the intent to re-deploy her in your department?

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, that's a matter for the re-deployment agency to deal with and find, if there is indeed some opportunity that Mrs. Rosenberg would be interested in and where this might best be arranged.

I simply would like to review again for the Member for Transcona the explanation of the failure and the decision not to renew Mrs. Rosenberg's contract. We have some 20 people in the department with three senior people which appeared to be rather excessive in terms of the number of senior people in the review agency, and it was a matter of determining which skills represented by those three people would be of the greatest benefit to the operation of the department in the future. The work that Mrs. Rosenberg did in the organization in starting up has been recognized, and I'm advised that this was a particular skill that she demonstrated in this work. However, the continuing role we foresee and the kind of cases that will likely be coming for the department and the review agency to deal with, probably require the skills as represented by the other two senior members more than they do those possessed by Mrs. Rosenberg. I can't be any more explicit or precise in the explanation for the decision than that, and I hope that that gives the answer that the member is seeking.

MR. PARASIUK: I guess there's just a very definite difference in attitudes between myself and the Minister as to how, in fact, efficient staff are in a sense rewarded and penalized within the Civil Service, and how efficient staff are re-deployed and how one develops morale, but I still wonder whether, in fact, the skills of Mrs. Rosenberg still aren't required. You have a situation where you have 20 people now, you have indicated that you may, in fact, be hiring more as the workload increases in terms of peak workload. That requires the ability to expand and contract staff. She has performed that ability and the other two senior people in that organization haven't. She has performed the management tasks. She has built the team. She in fact would be the person to continue doing that. If rent stabilization or the rent control of group is going to act in an aggressive manner, if in fact, it's going to act in a very passive manner and not do the types of things that it was doing last year and the year before, then I can see the need possibly to consolidate your staff, because that body will not do anything, and it's a paper organization so we get rid of the Executive Director now and phase out the other staff over a period of time and be left with a shell. Because I think that I have some more questions to ask regarding the specific operations but I do find that the explanation in my opinion — and it's my opinion versus his opinion — is not sufficient for the termination of Mrs. Rosenberg.

I would like to ask some questions about the board composition. Who now is on the board of the Rent Stabilization Board?!

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, I'm advised that there is no change in the board as it has been constituted with the exception of the one member who has been unable to act by reasons of health, but we are considering the function and the make-up of the board, but no recommendation has been made to Cabinet in that respect at this time.

MR. PARASIUK: Was the board consulted regarding the termination of Mrs. Rosenberg, or was that a departmental or Ministerial action?

MR. MCGILL: Well this was a departmental, as a result of a departmental review of the whole operation of the Rent Stabilization Board and the Review Agency and the projection of the future work activity and the kind of case-load that they would have to deal with.

MR. PARASIUK: You said the present staff complement is 20 people. What was the staff complement last year at this time?

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, the contract staff was cut from 35 positions to 22 positions. The current staff of 20 contract people plus two vacancies which exist at the moment and these will be filled when contracts are renewed at the end of June, so it will bring it back to approximately 22. I'm not sure that these two will be filled immediately, but depending on the volume of work, and this is the nature of the agency that it is by contract, able to respond in relatively short order to changing work loads as they are experienced.

MR. PARASIUK: I just forgot one question with respect to Mrs. Rosenberg. She was filling a permanent position and then she was taken on contract for this particular task. Was her permanent

position abolished?

MR. MCGILL: I'm not able to respond in any precise way to that. That is a Management Committee area and that matter is probably one that has been under review and under some investigation.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Chairman, I beg to differ with the Minister on this. The position would, I think, be with the department and my understanding is that the position was transferred to the department last year — last fiscal year. Therefore, it exists with the department and it's not for the Management Committee to abolish that position, it's for the department to make some decision with respect to that position. And I hope they do so with some care in that they would be setting horrible precedents with respect to people taking a leave of absence to perform another task; for people taking a leave of absence to work for another department on a special assignment; people taking a leave of absence to work for a Crown corporation; people in a Crown corporation taking a leave of absence to work for the national telecommunications group.

I know that people from the Manitoba Telephone System, for example, do that. They take an assignment in Ottawa for a couple of years. Well, I would hate for these people to take the assignment in Ottawa for a couple of years fearing that when they return they will have no position to return to. That's happened in other instances, as well. People have taken one or two-year leave of absences for educational leave, knowing that they have a permanent position to come back to because they've been civil servants for a long period of time. That's normally accepted; that's accepted as normal practice in public administration.

It used to be accepted as normal practice in the provincial administration of Manitoba. It certainly is accepted as normal practice in other provincial jurisdictions and certainly is accepted by the Federal Government. You have people who take a year's leave of absence and they go work for the CEDA or for External Affairs with developing countries, assuming that they will be coming back to fill a position. So people then fill the positions, or the vacancy caused by the leave of absence, with a one-year term contract, so that the person taking on that job knows that it's a one-year job or a two-year job, and it strikes me that that's the fairest way all around.

Well, now that seems to be changed and it's just not a Management Committee matter if that's being changed. Surely the Minister is the employing authority in this instance and as the employing authority, he is responsible for the employment conditions. He is accountable, and I just can't see that it is being done by Management Committee per se. It's something that the Minister surely should be aware of, because not only does he have that one staff person but it is assumed that he has a number of other staff as well.

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, I'm advised that with respect to Mrs. Rosenberg, her permanent position was under Executive Council and it was not transferred to the Department of Consumer Affairs. I think it was the policy at that time that there were to be no permanent employees in the Department of Rent Review, so these were non-permanent people who came to the Department of Consumer Affairs and the Rent Review Agency. And the position itself, if it indeed had permanent status was not transferred to . . .

MR. PARASIUK: So that it still stays with Executive Council then; is that what you're saying? Okay, I will check with the Executive Council on that through other means — question period or when the Estimates of Executive Council come before this committee.

Twenty people now, 35 people last year, you aren't sure whether you will be increasing the staff complement as the work-load increases, as it probably will when people try and understand and try and determine whether in fact the rent increase should be 6 percent, 5 ½ percent, or 5 percent. Because everything isn't cut and dried and can't be dealt with in a one-page statement, as was issued by the Minister. I've had many people ask a whole set of questions regarding the Rent Review Program, and I've passed these people on to what I thought was the capable qualified Executive Director of the Rent Stabilization Program. I now find that I don't know who I'm sending these inquiries on to. Who is going to replace Mrs. Rosenberg?

MR. MCGILL: There will be no replacement for Mrs. Rosenberg as Executive Director. That position has been eliminated.

MR. PARASIUK: Who is the number one administrative person in the Rent Stabilization Program? Because ultimately if people are making inquiries, they should talk to someone who is designated as the person responsible for the program.

MR. MCGILL: That's Mr. Julius.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Julius, so he will be the . . .

MR. MCGILL: Senior Rent Review Officer and Officer Manager.

MR. PARASIUK: What will the relationship be with the Rentalsman? You made some reference to the Rentalsman in your questions in the House on June 1st.

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, we're reviewing the possibility of using the experience and talents of the Rentalsman in connection with the Rent Stabilization Board and also to bring to the area of rent review some of his experience in landlord-tenant relationships. This has not been implemented, but that is the planning at this the moment and this recommendation will be taken to Executive Council in due course.

MR. PARASIUK: Well, Mr. Chairman, I can see the need for close liaison between the Rent Stabilization Program and the Rentalsman. I predict that the type of program announced by the Minister will put a lot of pressure on the Rentalsman. I think that the rates of 5 and 6 percent are just. I don't quarrel with those particular rates. The concern that I have relates to the loophole in the program whereby an apartment is decontrolled if someone voluntarily vacates it. What I foresee is that you will have an apartment block of 5 units or 7 units or 8 units — 3 decontrolled, 5 not decontrolled. The rent levels in the 5 units will be far lower than the rent levels in the 3 decontrolled units.

The experience in Alberta is such that they've had some pretty large increases so that in the same block you will have possibly 3 units paying \$40.00, \$50.00, \$60.00 a month more per rent. Now I think you're putting a tremendous pressure on the landlord to try and get the other five units producing that extra \$60.00 of rental revenue per month, because I think it's going to be horribly frustrating to the apartment block owner and the apartment block manager to see these different rents being paid for the units and I think, therefore, there are different ways in which pressure can be put on tenants.

I saw a CTV program on the news I guess last week with respect to Skyview Towers, and it was a bit ironic in a sense in that many of the tenants didn't feel that the landlord had in fact taken too much in rents even though the Rent Stabilization Board had ruled otherwise. I know that they dealt only with one case so I wasn't able to determine what the other people felt but the film clip itself showed pretty bad maintenance and the comment was, well, apart from some maintenance problems . . . But from what I saw on film, the maintenance problems were pretty severe in a fairly new block. I mean broken windows that aren't cleaned up, to me, is a maintenance problem, especially if you might have children in that block. The windows looked dirty and the panes on the ground looked dirty which, to me anyway, indicated that they hadn't been cleaned up for some time.

Now, those are the types of problems which one only glimpses but what about the leaky faucet, what about the other problems of maintenance that just aren't looked after? What about problems of noisy children or noisy parties, or animals, or that whole set of areas where I think judgments are involved and where people probably live and let live under normal conditions but they don't live and let live under these types of conditions where there will be a tremendous financial pressure to try and get the higher rents. Now, I'm not saying that all landlords are going to do that but I do think that people do respond to financial stimuli and I think this is a very strong stimulus for some landlords. I would think that the only people, then, who will be able to deal with this will be the rentalsman and I see that the Rentalsman's Office is basically the same as last year. I don't think there have been any great additions. From my experience in the past, I think the Rentalsman's Office was as busy as a Rentalsman's Office could be. I don't think it had the capacity to take on too many other functions. I think it was worked as hard as it could be worked in the past; I don't think it had any great free time at its disposal to do other tasks.

So I think that the program has some good features to it but I do think it has that one very large loophole through which a truck may or may not be driven. I guess time will tell in that respect but I do think there will be tremendous pressures put on the Rentalsman and I don't think that the Rentalsman has sufficient staff to deal with that because I don't think that the Rentalsman had sufficient staff in the past to deal with the task that the Rentalsman had to carry out, if the Rentalsman is going to carry out the fairly delicate task of landlord-tenant relations in a fairly diplomatic manner rather than doing it in a quicker but very bureaucratic manner of coming to a quick decision and not going through the process and dealing with both sides and giving them sufficient time to hear both sides of the argument.

I am wondering if the Minister had considered that problem that might arise in the Rent Stabilization Program if units within a particular block are decontrolled because people voluntarily

vacate it?

MR. MCGILL: Yes, Mr. Chairman, we have foreseen the situation where, by voluntary removal of a tenant, the unit becomes decontrolled provided other factors are complied with and they then would assume somewhat different rental levels than other units under control. But this cannot be considered unique to the forthcoming program; this already exists in a number of buildings where rents were at a different level when the retroactive legislation came into effect and caught some buildings with different situations and rent-up situations where they were attempting to rent

MR. PARASIUK: But they were all controlled in that block.

MR. MCGILL: But suddenly they were controlled, but at different levels, because they had been rented under different circumstances and these different levels of rents have been perpetuated by the guidelines that have been in effect since that time. So the problem is already with us in that respect in particular buildings and there will be other occurrences of the same thing now with the voluntary vacancy method of decontrol. But it isn't new to us and we don't necessarily like that kind of an anomaly within a building because it does provide other side effects that are not easy to respond to.

So it is something that we have foreseen and we can somewhat measure by reason of the fact that we have experienced it up to this point in other buildings.

The member also mentioned the role of the Rentalsman and the fact that he may be overtaxed in providing this additional expertise to the Rent Stabilization and Review Agency function but certainly the Rentalsman has been, over the years, dealing with exactly the kind of maintenance problems that the member is describing and he has been dealing with difficult tenants and landlords that probably don't maintain the building the way he would consider they should be done. I think that is the very reason that we need to have the benefit of that experience in the next phase particularly of the rent control program.

MR. PARASIUK: Is it envisioned that Rent Stabilization or Rent Review Officers will provide a monitoring function, that is, will they go out and determine whether the guidelines are being followed, with some spot checks, with some surveys, or is it the intent that the Rent Control Officers will sit back to receive complaints from suspecting tenants and not do anything about unsuspecting tenants who may in fact be paying too much rent?

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, the role of the Stabilization Board in terms of its responses is going to be maintained. It is not intended that there be any change in that role and that the agency would be expected to go out into the field and seek out areas where there might be some lack of observance of the regulations. But we certainly will attempt through publicity to make the new program as widely understood and known as possible. But responding specifically, we are not anticipating that there will be an aggressive new expansion of the role and to go out into the rental field seeking out possible areas where there might be an infraction or failure to observe the regulations.

MR. PARASIUK: I ask this question because there have been some studies in other cities which have indicated — through some surveys — that a large number of tenants were in fact being charged rents that exceeded the guidelines that existed in other provinces. I don't have the studies at hand but I do know that there was one done for Montreal. I am wondering whether in fact the Rent Stabilization Board has come across this study. I am wondering whether in fact the Research and Planning Branch of the Consumers Bureau has come across this study which has indicated that the problem is pretty widespread and that the percentage of tenants paying this extra rent was something over 25 percent.

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, where there is a complaint from just one tenant in a block, the agency responds and examines the situation generally in that block. Where another agency or consumer group undertakes on behalf of a tenant who is reticent about pursuing his own case, the board will respond and investigate the matter even though the tenant has not himself or herself come forward to do that. So the board is able to deal with matters that come from either a single tenant or from a consumer group that undertakes to pursue this matter on behalf of the tenant and investigations are then conducted.

MR. PARASIUK: The Minister didn't answer my question of whether the department was aware of studies in other cities which indicate, through surveys, that a great number of tenants have in fact been paying rents that were excessive to the guidelines in force at the time. You don't have

any material like that?

MR. MCGILL: No, I'm advised that we don't have such studies.

MR. PARASIUK: I can recall coming across some such references in the Financial Post in January; I will try to dig them up and send them over to you because I do think it is a problem and it exists elsewhere.

I would just like to clarify one of the things that the Minister just said. Am I hearing him correctly when he says that a group like the Associated Tenants Action Committee can in fact do some of its own phone surveys, can determine that some blocks are in fact not meeting the guidelines, or exceeding the guidelines, and issue a complaint to the Rent Stabilization Program and the matter will then be investigated or pursued by the Rent Stabilization Program?

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, if a group such as the one the member mentions has reason to believe that there is an infraction or contravention of the Act in a specific instance, the board can undertake to do what examination is necessary to determine whether this is correct or otherwise. The group itself does not have any authority conferred by the review agency or this department to go into this area but when matters are brought to their attention . . .

MR. PARASIUK: They would be seen as a consumer group acting on behalf of consumers. That is the only point that I have .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Brandon East.

MR. EVANS: I just have one question, Mr. Chairman, and that is whether the mobile home or trailer vehicles situated in trailer parks in various communities, well, the two communities of Winnipeg and Brandon, are to be covered by rent control? In other words, are mobile homes covered under the rent control regulations as amended?

MR. MCGILL: The answer to that is yes.

MR. EVANS: Is this being made clear to the various people affected, both the owners and the tenants themselves? I am not sure where your regulations stand and to what extent knowledge is available in the community and to what extent the people in the City of Winnipeg and Brandon, to what extent the people affected are knowledgeable of this. Is there any effort being made to make this well known?

MR. MCGILL: Well, I think, Mr. Chairman, the publicity has been directed to that particular group as well as to all other tenants in the province. The area certainly is one that is covered and we can certainly check to make certain that there hasn't been any particular omission on the part of the department to make that publicly known.

MR. EVANS: As a comment then, Mr. Chairman, I asked the question because I have been asked by a tenant of a mobile home who lives in a trailer park but who pays a rental for the use of the space and the services provided . So, there seems to be at least on the part of a certain individual in the City of Brandon, some concern whether they will continue or whether they are going to be under the Rent Control Program, but the Minister says that is the case so . . .

MR. MCGILL: They are also covered under the Landlord and Tenant Act.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 8.(a)—pass; 8.(b)—pass; Resolution 37: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$552,700—pass.

Appropriation 9., Resolution 38, Acquisition/Construction of Physical Assets, \$3,000—pass.

Resolution 38: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$3,000 for Consumer, Corporate and Internal Services, Acquisition/Construction of Physical Assets—pass.

Go back to the previous page, General Administration, I.(a), Minister's Compensation — Salary and Representation Allowance — the Member for Brandon East and then Tianscona.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask the Minister, unfortunately I had to be out when the Committee reviewed the Queen's Printer, including the Advertising Audit and Media Co-Ordination Centre, so, I think it's appropriate therefore that I ask it under this item, which is a general item, and as I understand from past practice just about anything can be asked under this item. I would like to ask whether the Minister is prepared to provide us, it doesn't have to

Monday, June 5, 1978

be this evening, but it can be in a few days from now, provide the members of the committee with a list of the advertising agencies that are currently being retained by the various departments of the government. I ask it of this Minister, Mr. Chairman, because as I read in the annual report of his department for the year 1977, I see on page 34 that the advertising audit office works closely with departments, advertising agencies and the media. I am simply reading here. It says. . . Well, without repeating it, there is a centralization of records kept in this office of this department, and I would therefore believe that the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs could readily provide us with that list. What I would like to know is, which advertising or public relations agency is now currently being retained by each department?

2 **MR. MCGILL:** We can certainly take that question under advisement and I don't think there's any difficulty in providing the member with a list of those advertising agencies that are now under some contract arrangements.

MR. EVANS: Well, Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Finance, in reply to my request for an order for return, did indicate that he was prepared to table a list of such agencies by department, commission, board or Crown corporation of the Government of Manitoba, in the Province of Manitoba. —(Interjection)— That's the point, I did submit an order for return, and maybe the honourable member wasn't around. We had some debate on it. At any rate, the Minister also indicated I could obtain it in the Estimates process, and it seems to me it was a difficult job, having already been half way through the departments, and it was almost impossible, in fact it is impossible to be in two places at one time, two committees at one time, to get a complete resume. But it has occurred to me since that debate, since you do have a centralized recording in this office, that it would be a relatively easy job for the Minister to obtain this, and make it available to members of the committee. That is the name of the agency for each department or Crown corporation or board or commission.

MR. MCGILL: We can get that information. I don't recall the specific problem with the order for return, but certainly as the member now puts his request to me, I see no difficulty in providing that form by way of a list and we will make that available to him within the next day or two.

MR. EVANS: Mr. Chairman, for the Minister's information, the problem was on the second part, not on the list. It was regarding the budgeted amounts, that was the problem.

MR. MCGILL: I see.

MR. EVANS: So, I'm not asking that at this time, I'm simply asking for that list.

MR. MCGILL: I'm just being advised that there are not budgeted amounts or fees as such in these accounts.

MR. EVANS: Mr. Chairman, I'm simply asking for the list.

MR. MCGILL: No, you were asking . . .

MR. EVANS: I'm simply asking for the list, I'm not asking for any figures. Then the other question is, what is the advertising budget of the government? I'm not really debating 7.(d), which is out of order, but I see under 7.(d)(3), Public Sector Advertising and Production, \$1.6 million, and I would ask the Minister whether that's a fair indication of the total advertising budget for the government, or is that only a portion of the advertising budget for the government? In other words, while this is itemized in this department, is there certain amounts shown in other departments that might be spent on advertising? It seems to me that that is the case. I don't know whether any other Estimates shows advertising per se. I recall in the Department of Industry and Commerce we used to have some moneys for advertising and public relations, not that much, but we had a bit, and we also worked of course through the advertising audit office. So, I'm asking now, is it still true that there is some moneys in the other departments that would have to be added to this figure of \$1.6 million to get the total or global estimate of moneys to be spent on advertising and public relations?

For instance, in the Department of Industry and Commerce there is a small amount under information and promotion, other than salaries, apart from salaries, there's some moneys for information and promotion in Industry and Commerce. I use that just as an example, should that be added to this figure or is it possible that that item under Industry and Commerce doesn't really belong to pure advertising but is rather an expenditure in that department related to advertising but not being advertising purely?

MR. MCGILL: Well I understand that this figure represents the total advertising for all departments and Crown corporations and that if one were to go through the Estimates and pick up individual department amounts for that, that they should total up to this amount that is indicated here.

MR. EVANS: Mr. Chairman, on that very point, did I hear the Minister correctly when he said . . .

MR. MCGILL: This is recoverable from other departments. Do you notice that down below that there is \$1,600,000 that's recoverable. We are showing this as a total and it comes . . .

MR. EVANS: So, therefore it's duplicated in other words.

MR. MCGILL: Well, not really, it's in and out of this Estimate here.

MR. EVANS: Oh, I see, because it's subtracted, I see, yes, right. But at any rate, so that therefore is a fair estimate of the total advertising budget of the government and its agencies.

MR. MCGILL: Yes.

MR. EVANS: Well, fine, I'll just look forward to that listing, if we can get it in the next few days, I'd appreciate it.

MR. PARASIUK: How long does it usually take for the companies branch to determine whether a company is using its name legally or not?

MR. MCGILL: Well, perhaps I can go through this procedure as I'm advised here. Upon receipt of a complaint that a corporation is carrying on business without being registered under the Corporations Act, the department writes to the corporation, pointing out the requirements of the law with respect to such registration, and diarizes the file for six weeks. If no reply is received, a further letter is sent demanding registration. The file is again diarized for six weeks. If at the end of the 12-week period no satisfactory explanation is received, or the corporation is not registered, the matter is referred to the Attorney-General's Department for prosecution. Quite often an extra-provincial or Federal Corporation may commence business without knowing the law and it could take a considerable time to obtain the necessary documents to effect registration, hence the two six-week time factors earlier mentioned.

MR. PARASIUK: I thank the Minister for providing those procedures, because the matter was a bit confusing until he provided that. I assume then that the government must be on to the second diary because I think the matter was raised over six weeks ago, and I guess that's where matters stand now and the question probably is germane in five weeks time.

I just wanted to confirm one thing with the Minister so that I don't find myself precluded from asking questions tomorrow in the Public Utilities Committee meeting. I'm interested in the whole area of the arguments for and against the public ownership of cable, and the arguments that are taking place as to whether we should be extending television transmission through cable or through Telestat. Those are fairly technical matters, and I was hoping to get an explanation from some of the technical people involved, at least on the government side in a sense, to get the public case or to get the modified public case or what from public officials, because I've been reading about press conferences that are being held by the private sector, and they are putting forward arguments. I'm in a rather confused position on it and I would like to be able to get the boring but detailed technical arguments from staff and I assume that tomorrow is the best place to raise those questions. Am I correct in assuming that because I will be raising them tomorrow at the Public Utilities Committee and I would hate the Minister or Chairman of the Manitoba Telephone System to tell me that, well, those are issues that you should have raised in Consumer Affairs Estimates, because we are just closing out Consumer Affairs Estimates, and I just don't want to lose my chance of raising those particular points.

MR. MCGILL: I think they're in order in the Public Utilities Board Committee.

MR. PARASIUK: Okay, fine.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1.(a)—pass; Resolution 30: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$633,400—pass.

Committee rise.

Lady and gentlemen, that concludes the Department of Consumer, Corporate and Internal Services. o\$

SUPPLY — DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

MR. CHAIRMAN, Mr. Abe Kovnats: I would direct the honourable members to Page 43, Resolution No. 64, Department of Health and Social Development, Clause 8, Manitoba Health Services Commission, (1) Administration—pass — the Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, what I was trying to do before the dinner hour was we've talked about the way the Commission has been treated, or I should say, ignored. Now, I want to make sure that it be quite understood that it is not the responsibility of the Commission, but of the Minister in the government, that is, the increase that was given to the personal care homes and the hospitals has to be the responsibility of the government, and the government alone. And Mr. Chairman, what I want to know is, the different hospitals have been told to live within their budgets, and then of course, they've got to file — the Minister was talking about the file, of the result, what has been happening — for the, I guess it will be the first month. It must be in by now; it must be the month of April. And where is that? That is being filed with whom, with the Commission or the Minister? That is, there's three different possibilities; with the Minister and his department; with the Commission or with the staff of the Commission.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, that is being filed with the Commission. The different hospital facilities were requested, within a month of receipt of their 1978-79 global budget, to provide the Commission with detailed allocation of the budget and of the components of that budget in the format of the Commission's quarterly statement of income and expenses.

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Chairman, and I might say that my staff has just reminded me that that procedure is in accordance with the appeal process set out in legislation, but just before we broke for Private Members' Hour the Honourable Member for Seven Oaks had commented on the termination — at least the apparent termination — of the Day Psychiatric Program at the Misericordia Hospital. I just want to assure him that that was a decision that was made by the hospital; it was not made by the department; it was not advised or suggested; it was a decision undertaken by the hospital. They chose to close that service down, and as a matter of fact, we're still reviewing that decision, because all things being equal, we would like to see that program restored. But what happens here, and I'm sure it happened to the Honourable Member for Seven Oaks, is that when these challenges are imposed on boards and on facilities, there are different methods of response, and one has to try to reach compromises and adjustments to ensure that the responses are in the consensus interest of patient care and service to the public. We're not preventing boards and facilities from reacting or responding in any way they see fit in terms of their initial response, but we're concerned with the quality of patient care, with the maintenance of recognized necessary services and that's the reason for the review, to ensure that those services are maintained and that it has not simply been a reflexed reaction through which a particular board or administrator or administration hopes perhaps to achieve a different budgetary decision from the government. If there is room there to make savings in unnecessary areas, we want those unnecessary areas found and identified and the savings made. If the only way they can do it is by moving into necessary areas, well then we have to look at that. That's the purpose of the process and the purpose of the review, and we haven't satisfied ourselves that the reaction at Misericordia is necessarily a reaction that is based on the best available course of action opened to that hospital. We want to review that decision for that reason, to determine whether there aren't other ways that they can come in inside their budget without terminating or disrupting a service of that kind.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Seven Oaks.

MR. MILLER: Well, Mr. Chairman, now I think I've heard everything. You know, for days this Minister has said to us, "We have granted a global budget in order to give the hospitals the flexibility they should have; in order to give them the opportunity to review their operations; in order to allow them to make decisions." And he repeated today, the Misericordia Hospital, with regard to the Psychiatric Day Treatment Centre, that the closing down of the operation of that program was a Board decision.

I indicated to him, and I read from a letter, that the Board took this decision because they had no alternative, because they are faced with a 2.9 budget. And faced with that, you have to cut

and so they reduced this, and the Minister in the past has said, "Well, that's the autonomy of the hospital, and he's not the hospital board; it's their decision." So he puts the onus on them. Now he's doing some fancy back-peddalling. Now he says, "But, now we are concerned." We meaning, he, the Minister and his government are concerned about patient care, and, "Sure, we are going to look at it; we are going to review it," and I assume what he says, if they find that that program shouldn't have been cut or is not the program that he would like to see cut, he will, through the Commission, see to it that program is reinstated and find somewhere else to cut. So, you can't ride both horses. You cannot say, "I have granted money based on a Cabinet decision of 2.9 because we interpret our mandate to be restraint and that's all we're granting you, and it's up to you though to then spend it as you see fit." That's the terms he used, "As they saw fit." So on the one hand he puts the onus totally on the Board — anything that happens is the Board's fault. Now, today for the first time he back tracks and he says, "There'll be a review." And if we don't like the cuts they've made, if we find the patient care is indeed affected, or for whatever reason the Minister might have, we will have to talk to the hospitals and see to it that perhaps that program is reinstated and maybe force the hospital to cut somewhere else unless that 2.9 unless— what's implied in the answer, that that 2.9 percent will be raised to something higher through a special warrant or some other means. Mr. Chairman, that's exactly the point I've been trying to make, that the 2.9 was indeed a figure plucked out of the air. It was an irrational amount. It's not based on anything.

And what I'm critical of is the fact that instead of saying we would like to slow down or we would like to lower the cost of hospitals, let's review what's going on in there, let the commission and the Minister's office if he wants to be directly involved, go through every operation, we'll say, within the hospital. We'll look at it, evaluate it, and then we'll make a determination — we'll recommend that this go and that go, in consultation with the hospital. And that's what I'm critical of — that they didn't do it that way. They just lopped it off. They cut it off at the knees, or as one of my colleagues said, "no, at the throat." They cut it off and said, "Now, we'll see."

So in the meantime a particular program I referred to is not operative. Two of the people who are participating in the psychiatric day treatment centre have now, I am told, and I can only go by what I'm told, have now been re-admitted to the hospital in the acute care bed, so it's April, no program, May, no program, June, no program. You're going to end up with a review eventually, but in the meantime you may say to the hospital, "This is too important a program. Reinstatement. But find the money elsewhere." So you're really going to be involved in helping them seek out where to find the money, or if the money isn't there which I suspect, you're going to have to increase the amount you're granting to hospitals.

So when I said earlier that you are tripling the hospitals I meant that very seriously, that you are affecting their operation I meant it seriously — that you're creating havoc in the hospitals I also meant that seriously. Sure there's time for restraint. We went through that exercise too, and I recall catching it from the opposition when I imposed an 8 percent ceiling and being told this is a terrible, terrible ceiling you imposed on the hospitals, but you can't compare 8 percent with a totally irrational 2.9 which is taken out of I don't know where. Maybe they just assigned a lot of dollars around and when it came down to it there was a lump sum left for hospitals or for health services and it came out to 2.9 so that's how they arrived at 2.9 because of the dollars involved.

So, Mr. Chairman, when the Minister says to me, "The Board made a decision as they saw fit", I'll give him the same argument that I gave him before — you can say to somebody, "You have one meal a day but the choice is yours. You can call it breakfast. You can call it lunch. You can call it supper. You can call it a midnight snack, but you're only entitled to one meal a day. That's it. That's the same Hobson's choice you're giving the hospitals.

But now, after telling us all about the flexibility and the responsibility being theirs and the decision being theirs, you're now backtracking and saying, "Well, if we don't like what they're doing because it's not in the interests of quality care we may have to have them look at it again and reinstate it. In the meantime, programs are being cut, services are being cut, and people are being hurt.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. SHERMAN: Well, Mr. Chairman, I assure the honourable member that there is no backtracking being done. We have advised the hospitals and health facilities from the outset that we want to see their budgets and we want to go through a review with them, and we want to work with them on identification of difficulties, if there are difficulties.

The honourable member talks about giving them a global budget, and then saying, well, all right, we'll make the final decision. But that isn't the case at all; there are different responses. The honourable member has been in this business and he was Minister of Health long enough to know that there are different responses. One can go to one hospital and say, "This is the way it has

to be this year," and receive a very positive response in which nothing of an essential or patient service nature is touched; and rationalizations are made in other areas and indeed some administrators have said to me, Mr. Chairman — and I'm not going to labour this point, I've said it before — they have said to me, "This is a good thing, and long overdue." Now there are other hospitals as there are other politicians, as there are other corporations, as there are other nations, that react differently to that kind of challenge, and the honourable member is not going to force me to say things here that I don't want to say, he can read between the lines, he's been Minister of Health. Some hospitals react in a different way, and sometimes decisions are made that are perhaps not the necessary decisions, and they're made for purposes of achieving a specific position in bargaining or in relation to the government's position, no different than collective bargaining in the labour market, in the industrial market. And I'm going to leave it at that. I trust that the honourable member knows what I'm saying, these things are geared to response. He can't point to a lot of hospitals and a lot of health facilities that have come back and said, "Look, we can't do it." He can't point to that, because the vast majority of them have not said that, they've said the opposite. There are some who've said, "We can't do it," and all we're saying is, "We want you to show us that you can't do it."

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

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, we've had a little scrimmage ever since we started this department, but this is getting to be a little bit annoying, because the Minister now is trying to con the members of this House, and I'm getting a little fed up with it.

To start with, Mr. Chairman, the Minister talks as if he invented this question of being careful. He just said a few minutes ago, "This is something new. It's long overdue," and that's a lie. That's a lie because it wasn't done, and I'm going to prove it to you, Mr. Chairman, because every year for the past two or three years, there's been the same exercise with those hospitals. Let me tell you, you can look at *The Tribune* of May 15, 1976:

"The Health Sciences Centre eliminated about 260 staff positions between September and December of 1975 and nearly wiped up a project of \$1.8 million deficit," the hospital's vice-president of administration said Friday — and that goes on and on.

Another one, August 26, 1977, where they were told that there was so much money, and they went with that to review. And here Mr. Quaglia, at St. Boniface Hospital indicated that his institution lost about \$100,000 from the April to July period this year. He said the hospital was appealing its 1977 operating budget to the Health Services Commission, the outcome of which would largely determine whether there will be a deficit. All I can say is that we're going to work like a son-of-a-gun to try and come out even as we did last year. And I have a pile of these things during which this exercise last year. And now, everything has been done to discredit the past administration; everything. Not necessarily by this Minister during the Estimates, but before that during the campaign. And the Minister, not in this House, but when he's talking to somebody else, not in the House when we have a chance to respond; that's not being done.

Now Mr. Chairman, let's look at this. First of all, the Commission, it is clear, has been ignored completely, and these are going to the staff of the Commission, not the Commission. The Minister took it upon himself, and on October 11th, or October 24th, there was a new government; they had the mandate, but they chose to decide themselves and it was all predetermined what was going to be done. I ask the Minister right now, today, to tell me the rationale for an increase of 2.9. Tell me where he got that? Certainly not from the Commission. The staff, the staff will work with him; he can't blame the staff for that. Was it with the MMA, who are criticizing that it's hurting now? Is it the MMA, because we heard so much there would be no confrontation, but consultation.

And I remember the former critic — where is he from? Rhineland, at a meeting of the nurses, he says, "If we take over, we will talk to you, to the doctors, to the dentists, to the chiropractors, to the chiropodists, to the optometrists, and what you tell us to do we will do." Now, there's not this kind so it's not the Commission, it is not the MMA, it's not the nurses association. Is it the patients? Is it the Board of different hospitals? Is it the administrators of different hospitals? No. Where is the rationale for 2.9? Where? Now, the Minister said — now, he's backing down a bit — the Minister said, "This is not an exercise, you will have to live up with this. Don't bother coming back to us." He's not saying the same thing tonight, well he's learning, and he's right, because there is no way. I defy the Minister, and I'll bet him anything right now, tonight, that they will not, in Manitoba, will not live, no matter what, to 2.9 increase in hospitals. There is no way this will be done.

Then we talked about, you know, there's so much flexibility, we're talking about flexibility; the Minister's on every side of every issue, and he's ready to take the credit — his picture, his mug is in the paper when they're opening a heart surgery in St. Boniface, but it's not there when they're not changing the sheets in other areas. Now, we're talking about what? We're talking about global

budgets. Well, a global budget is not something new. Global budget, for those that don't understand, and that should go for the Minister also, is here, there's so much money, don't bother me, you make do with that. That's exactly what it is. If it's not a global budget, well then, you're line by line.

Now, if you want a combination of both, well say so, but let's not always talk about global budget and say, it's not my fault, but somebody else's and it will change. This is an exercise, it has to be an exercise and it's not a new exercise, it's not a new exercise and besides are they all getting 2.9, are they all getting 2.9? I understand that the Health Sciences Centre, for instance, well all the hospitals, but there is no provision for replacement, what do they call this? — for the depreciation and replacement of equipment and so on. Now this is public, apparently there is nothing there at all, that's about \$600, 000 to the Health Sciences Centre, so that comes to what, to about 2 percent.

Mr. Chairman, it was a government and a Minister who relied on one thing, that they were replacing an administration that couldn't run a peanut stand, that had all kinds of horror stories, that didn't know how to manage anything and there was so much fat and the cuts the Minister said were to be made in administration. You know, I keep a pretty good file of what the Minister has been stating and I look at it nearly every night, and I'm getting more familiar with it than he is.

That's one of the things that he said, two days after he was chosen Minister, they became the government, he said — and I took a note of this — "Budget cuts from the department will definitely be made but only if they are necessary," definitely be made but only if they are necessary and that is the way they came in with a pre-determined idea that there was all kinds of waste. They can't find any and they're stuck. Now, there's got to be a rationale, why 2.9 percent Did they put a bunch of numbers in a hat and every member of the Cabinet pulled one out? Is that it, and then there was a winning ticket and it happened to be 2.9 percent? Where was the rationale for that? Mr. Chairman, as I said the other day, and I've played ball, and I'm ready to play ball as much as possible with this Minister, but there's a damn limit, there's a limit because we're being conned, we're being conned, there is no rationale for what this government is doing. They are changing from one day to the other. They are flying kites to try and decide the trial balloons that the Task Force have been sending out and when they're really stuck, well they blame the former administration. Like the Minister said just a little while ago which brought me on my feet, that it's about time that this was done, and it's been done every year that I can remember. It will keep on being done. That was the role of the commission and every budget was really reviewed and they've had to appeal, and many times the appeal was refused, but the Minister said this time this is not an exercise. There is no way, there is no public pressure, nothing that will change this, nothing.

He also said that there would be a freeze on construction for 90 days. It is twice 90 days plus 30 days and we know nothing except in one area that there was a big play, as I said the press was invited to accompany the Minister when he went to Snow Lake, and what about the other people because they didn't raise hell. Mr. Chairman, the Minister has got to start being a little more honest and a little more candid and he's got to give a little leadership. So far it's been a hell of a lot of P.R., but it's catching up with him, it's catching up, we've had nearly every day, also, his personal commitment, his personal guarantee. Well that's not worth a hell of a lot right now because we're changing so often. It would be the same staff-patient ratio, for instance in the mental hospital and that's not the case at all, Mr. Chairman, and we've only started.

Now, it's not the fact that this government and this Minister is saying, all right we're going to have another look, it's a brand new administration, we're going to be tough. That I will go along with, but without knowing a thing about this, without knowing anything or without consulting with anybody that knows, this government came in so sure that they were going to find out all kind of mismanagement that they made some stupid statements, and now they're trying to back up and they're changing every day. One of them was 2.9 percent increase and I'll say again, and I'll take a bet even with that loud-mouth in the back out there, I'll bet any money that he wants that there will be a deficit in the hospitals this year —(Interjection)— You scare the hell out of me. So, Mr. Chairman, —(Interjection)— What did you do have a liquid supper again, so you're going to speak.

Mr. Chairman, the thing is as I say again and I challenge the Minister, he said it's only going to be an exercise, there will be a deficit, and then my honourable friend said, well, you know, not everybody is the same. If you have a global budget and the people are — he said they're not complaining, they are doing everything they can, they are doing everything they can again to save money, and I'm very anxious and I wish the heck that these Estimates would be considered after we have the first month of all the hospitals in Manitoba, because I'd like to see if we're going to have a deficit to see if I'm right, if I win my bet and to see if the Minister's going to say that's not an exercise, you live with it. There is no way, this is not a realistic figure at all. This is not the right exercise during the Estimate debate at all.

Now, in other areas the Minister has asked for a cushion, but I don't know, maybe he'll tell us,

maybe there is a cushion. Now, in some areas there is no doubt that the standard has been reduced, not so much, not that much, but the Minister will have to wake up and say all right, he's saying now there's not — well he says there's not. Well let me give you an example. In one hospital for instance, to save \$7,000 they then put the air conditioning on, it was 72 degrees Fahrenheit. Do you mean to tell me that any one of us here you'd like to see your wife in labour in that hospital with 92 degrees Fahrenheit, do you think that's the good standard? Aren't you taking a chance of losing some patients to save \$7,000.00. You save \$7,000.00.

Ask the Nurses Association what they think, ask them, they're telling you that they're not getting along with the management the way they used to, everything was fine. Do you know what they tell us? That some members of the board are telling them, get ready for a strike and we hope there's a strike because we're going to save money, we might live within our budget. Oh, they're trying to live within their budget. That's the kind of service we want to give. You know, the only thing that this government is doing, they see that big dollar sign again, and that's the main thing, that comes the first thing of all.

If the Minister would have said, all right, I'm new at the game like he said in his department and he got along. Any time it was questionable, we gave him the advantage and he could have done the same thing — we're a new government, I'm a new Minister, we want to save money, we said that there's too much money spent in this so therefore we're telling them to try to live up to this and then we'll examine their budget, their deficit if any, and we'll talk and we'll see where they make the cuts, to see if they're realistic to see if the standards are going to go down. But that's not what is said. You've got to live with this and it is not an exercise no matter what. No public pressure will change this, you're living with this.

You know, the Minister, there is no way that he can make it stick, no way, so what is it if going to be next year. You know this was done, what we said, once you get your final approval, you get your review and that don't go in a deficit, because year after year some of them were were getting a deficit, even once they approve their budget. And this is what caused this restraint.

And furthermore, the Minister gets mad at us the first time there is any question here in the House at all; he cries "Foul." And they are little things, but they all add up, and that's how petty it is because the Boards and the hospital are in such a desperate situation to try to save money. They've arranged for instance that you bring your own Kleenex in the hospital. If you don't have Kleenex, you tell the nurse — take the roll of toilet paper and use that for Kleenex. And those are the kind of things, I'm giving an example — I didn't ask — these things before the Orders of the Day but that is what they're trying. You know, there is no doubt that the people are honest; Victoria Hospital called their people in, "Take a reduction," but who are asked to take a reduction? Who are asked to take a reduction? What did I say on another occasion in this House, Mr. Chairman, I said, we will go along with this question of restraint when we find out that the people who are on the 20 percent of the top bracket, that is, a little under \$30,000, when they're asked and when they show us what they're going to do for restraint. No. You know, the Minister made a big thing that the medical association were just getting — what? 6 percent, well, between 6 and 7 percent. 6 percent of what? \$40,000, \$50,000, \$60,000, \$100,000.00? And the people in the hospital, cleaning up, mopping up, are told, "Take a reduction because we're in a hell of a fix." You see why we can't take that, Mr. Chairman? Why we can't take that any more? And it's always the same.

Now, the things have been pretty easy for this government. Things have been easy for this government; we certainly have been easy during the Estimates. We've asked a lot of questions but I think we've been very fair, but there is a limit when the accusation, and when the Minister gets up and says, "It's about time that this be done, because it was never done in the past." You know, no wonder you start boiling under the collar a little bit, Mr. Chairman, when you hear that. Now, as I said, and I hope we're going to have that — the Minister must have it now — maybe there will be a dodge, that we won't get it for a while, but the Minister must have and the Commission must have, the first month. Their fiscal year was changed, they all started on April 31st, I mean March 31st, so now we should have April. I want to know who lived up to that 2.9 percent, Mr. Chairman. I have no doubt that some of the hospitals, especially in the rural areas, that haven't got that many patients, might have lived up to it. You can always find something. But I'm talking about the general conditions across the province, and I would like to know what it is. Then I would want the Minister to tell me what the rationale was for 2.9 percent; where he got this great idea? I want to know. I think we're entitled, I think the people of Manitoba are entitled to know why 2.9; why not 3 percent? Why not 4 percent? And why 4.4 percent? And why wasn't the MMA listened to? Why wasn't this discussed with the MMA, with the nurses' group, as was promised? Or with anyone?

You know, you see a brand new Minister who knows very little about this field who chastised the hospital, it's their fault. People that for years have been trying to run a hospital, and they are blamed. And he says that some of them tell him, "Well, this is about time this is done." Now, Mr. Chairman, there's many questions that we want, that we'd like to see answered. First of all, I'd

like to know the staff in the different hospitals in the city — it would take too long in the rural area, but at least in the city, and I'm including Brandon, the General Hospital in Brandon, and Portage, the staff that they had, the staff that was reduced, and also the vacancies that we have now.

Mr. Chairman, the Minister now, like my colleague said, is backing down, because he said no matter what, there wouldn't be any change. Now he said, well, we'll see, and you know, the statement was made, well, the standard is important, ever since the Minister was caught, and he keeps on repeating, that was only for capital — it wasn't only for capital, it was for many programs. For instance, at the Health Science Centre, the psychiatric beds for the kids, it was all set, it was ready to go, and that is the number one priority as far as the Minister is concerned, he admits that, but that was frozen. They're looking around for beds, I don't know where they're going to find them. They're looking around for beds, and in the meantime there's no psychiatric beds for the children in our society and in our province.

Now, Mr. Chairman, what prompted me to get up was that statement of the Minister that this wasn't done in the past, it was high time that this should be done, and again to say that he wasn't backing down, that this was done in the past. In the past the budget was looked at by the Commission. The Commission discussed with the government how much, they made their recommendation how much money there should, how much percentage. There was a decision made, an initial decision, and this was passed on to the Board. When they had a global budget they tried to work it, they were told beforehand there were certain things, it was a global budget, but there were certain areas, that the government had given them some special money to start a program, and had farmed out that program to them and then that wasn't going to be touched. That's true. Then they appealed, and then it had to come back to the Cabinet, the Minister and then the Cabinet, and finally they were told that's it, and we give them credit, and I certainly give them credit for trying. To hear the Minister speak today, this was a free-for-all, they can do what they want and they had all kinds of grandiose dreams, and they can do anything because they were going to automatically get a blank cheque from the Commission. Well, Mr. Chairman, that's not exactly the way it worked in the past.

So, I hope that the Minister will be able to tell us, worry about this idea of 2.9 and 4.4, we want to know the staff component of the different hospitals and the vacancies that we have now and I'm talking about the comparison the same as we had for the department and for the Manitoba Health Services Commission, Mr. Chairman, and I think there's some other areas around the hospital when we get to that line that I want to speak on.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. MCKENZIE: Mr. Chairman, it's likely been very rare in the regime of this government when a backbencher will stand and try to deal with the matter of Estimates in his own constituency because our caucus and our Cabinet, we meet on a very regular basis, and I think that we, as backbenchers, can deal with these matters in caucus and through the Cabinet media much different than the government that was operated across the way for all those years. But, Mr. Chairman, I rise on this occasion because of the allegations and charges that's made from the Honourable Member for St. Boniface, attacking my Minister, attacking this government, and well knowing where the words came from, Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. Boniface said that the Honourable Minister of Health and Social Development is "riding on both sides of every issue."

Mr. Chairman, we have just done through our Research Department a complete study of all the allegations that the Member for St. Boniface has made since the day he arrived in this Legislature. And I tell you if the press and the members opposite, or anybody wants to see the file on this man, and if anybody has been on both sides of every issue all the years he's sat in this Legislature, it's the Honourable Member for St. Boniface. He came here as a Liberal and sat over there; I remember some of the debates when he fell off the chair there, paper flying, I forget what the issue was, I think it was aid to private and parochial schools in those days. We know where he stands on Autopac; we know where he stands on deterrent fees; we know where he stands on other issues that's already documented because all we have to do is read Hansard.

But, Mr. Chairman, I wonder, I wonder with the background of the member that just spoke, knowing the long years that he's been here, he's been through the mysteries of the Chairman of the Board of the Manitoba Health Services Commission; he's been through the Department, the portfolio of the Minister of Health; and being a Liberal surely he must remember some place along the line he had a couple of old Liberal buddies by the name of the great Nick Hryhorczuk, great Liberal from Ethelbert Plains constituency who sat in this House, his son Mike Hryhorczuk sat in this House, he sat with him, and today, Mr. Chairman, there is no trace of health delivery system anywhere in that area. From Dauphin to Swan River it's absolutely non-existent, non-existent, and this Member for St. Boniface stands up here tonight and makes charges and allegations against my Minister and says about being on both sides of the fence. If any Minister should have delivered

a health delivery system to that area between Dauphin and Swan River that man from St. Boniface should have delivered it. He sat with the Liberals in this House in those days; he was a buddy to the Hryhorczuk family, the great Ukrainians of the Ethelbert Plains and all that north area. Sat with them, knew what they wanted, understood their problems, dealt with them day by day and made speeches over here on the very same subject that I'm making speeches right here tonight. Here he sits over here and charges my Minister and our government 2.9 percent increase. I tell you, in Ethelbert Plains today we'll accept no increase because we don't have a health delivery system, it's non-existent.

He stands up in this House and makes charges and allegations about health delivery and charges my Minister of being on both sides; what did he do when he was the Chairman of the Health Services Commission Board for that area? He did nothing. What did he do as a Minister, as a health and social developer, that great Ukrainian bastion of this province? He did absolutely nothing, nothing. And he stands up and makes these charges and allegations against my Minister, I think it's time, Mr. Chairman, that we bring the record of this man into the House and let the press know some of the statements that this man has made over the years and stand up in this House and charge my Minister of riding the fence on both sides.

I think it's uncalled for; it's untimely and it's very poor politics; because knowing the background of this man and this member, he, no way, can stand up in this House and make charges and allegations until he can prove, in his days as Minister, as Chairman of the Board, that he would deliver even one nurse or one doctor or one little bit of a hospital, between the area from Dauphin to Swan River — and that's a lot of miles — 110 miles.

The Member for St. Boniface stands up in this Legislature and charges my Minister and this government about 2.9 percent or 4.4 percent, those people up in there don't want any increase because they don't have a system, nothing, not an ambulance, not a hospital, not a nurse. Sure, there was a Personal Care Home built in Ethelbert a year ago, and that was great. We enjoyed it. We thanked the government for it and we're most grateful. But what do you do with a Personal Care Home when you don't have a doctor or a nurse in the area? —(Interjection)— Yes, I'm sure. But I hear the members opposite charging my Minister day after day ' "Get a doctor into Snow Lake." —(Interjection)— Well, I just listened to the questions that are coming across the floor, charging government as the responsibility.

What did you do in your days of government? Or what did you, as Liberals, when you were a Grit, what did you do about that area? I would have thought, as a last heritage before he was dumped out of office, that that Minister and that government, because they had a sitting member — Mr. Kawchuk was the Member for Ethelbert Plains constituency — I thought that Minister and that government would at least leave some heritage to those people. They never left them anything, and that's the bastion of the Ukrainian society of all Manitoba; they're still there. I'm sure the old man Nick Hryhorczuk was a member here in the Twenties and he's still living today, God bless his soul; and his son, Mike, who was the Attorney-General in the Campbell government, he was here; and this gentleman from St. Boniface stands up and makes all these charges, and allegations and blames us for everything.

My gosh, just let the records show, Mr. Chairman, what he did as the Minister for that community, for those Liberals — and the heritage is still there those Liberals, they're still there today — nothing, absolutely nothing. He walked away and left them. His personal buddies, his personal Liberal friends, he walked out and left them with nothing.

So I say, before the Honourable Member for St. Boniface rises again to his feet, let him explain — when he was the Chairman of the Health Services Commission, or when he was a Minister, or when Mr. Kawchuk was the member — why that government didn't leave a heritage to that Ukrainian community?

Well let me say to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, I guarantee you before the tenure or the four years of this government is up, this government will leave — even if it's a two-nurse station and a clinic with two people so that when the people get sick in the Personal Care Home — we will build a heritage to that Ukrainian domain of all Manitoba, the Ethelbert Plains constituency.

The Grits couldn't do it; the NDP couldn't do it, but I guarantee you, Mr. Chairman, we will do it. No thanks to that government and no thanks to that man over there from St. Boniface who had a chance. He had a chance when he was the Chairman of the Board of the Health Services Commission; he had a chance when he was Minister; he didn't do it; and he's standing up here and blazing us tonight because of a 2.9 percent.

I agree, certainly we need 2.9 percent, or whatever it is; but we certainly need a health delivery system of some kind between Dauphin and Swan River. We never got it from that government. God bless the soul of this Minister, we will have it before our four years are up, I guarantee you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. ADAM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Last Tuesday when I left the building at 10 o'clock I ran into somebody on the steps that I didn't know, a Winnipeg citizen, and he wasn't very well. He had just come out of the hospital and he was on compensation. The first comments he made to me, he says, "In three years time you will be back in power in the government." He was in one of the major hospitals and his wife was with him — I didn't ask the man's name — he said, "You know, I just came out of the hospital and I want to tell you that when I was there — I want to explain to you what happened to me." He says, "We're not getting the service; the nurses are not coming around; you see them maybe every two hours, three hours." He said that he had stomach trouble while he was in the hospital and he says, "I had five bed pans lined up against the wall, uncleaned, with human excretion; and they were not changed until my wife came in to take them away." So when the Minister stands up here and says that he's delivering health service to this province, he is deluding everybody and he's deluding himself as well.

Over the weekend, I had a call from a lady in our area. Her husband is panelled to go into a nursing home. She says there is something wrong at that hospital. "That man is starving, she said, "I am able to go and visit him twice a week and everytime I go I bring a lunch. I bring orange juice." And she says he will sit down as if he hadn't eaten for two or three days. "There is something wrong," she said, "and I have asked the hospital. I want to go in there during mealtimes. I want to go in at dinner time and at lunch time to see what he has got on his plate, and they won't give me access in there." She said there is something wrong. "So," she says, "I think I am going to have to take him out because the man is starving in that hospital."

Now, these are serious charges. There is something else she told me that disturbed me somewhat, and she was quite disturbed because the entire income of the family — there was one child going to school yet — the patient receives a senior citizen pension. The wife does not receive a spouse's allowance but there is a Canada Pension Plan of \$130, I believe, along with the pension. Now, she was advised sometime in May, I believe — she didn't give me the date and I stand to be corrected — she was advised that she would have to pay the per diem, \$7 per diem, for her husband in the hospital. I am not sure just when she was advised; I perhaps should have asked her. She went in at the end of May to pay the \$210 and they advised her right away that she would have to pay for June. In other words, they were asking her for \$420.00. She said, "There was just no way that I was able to scrape up that kind of money and be able to survive for the next month, and I have a child." So this lady is faced with having to go to welfare now because of the payment for May and the payment for June. She apparently was not advised in time to make the payment the beginning of May, or else she didn't understand that she had to make it in the beginning of May, so she was faced with a \$400 payment.

I decided I should go and visit the hospital. We walked in about seven-thirty. It was still visiting hours. The place was in darkness. There was only one light, a very dim light, in the lobby and there was a light where the nursing station was. The rest of the hallways were all in darkness. I asked one of the orderlies what was the problem in the hospital. He said, "Well, we are so controlled in our budget that we are turning all the lights out. We are trying to save in every area we can so the hospital is in darkness." I imagine the patients were in darkness, as well, in their rooms. This is visiting hours.

So then I questioned further. I said, "Well, what about the bed sheets?" And he said, "Well, we only change them when we darn well have to. There is no way that we are changing the sheets." So I said, "Well, what about the bandages?" Same thing. "We are not changing them unless we darn well have to."

This is in every hospital. It is happening in every hospital. You can laugh, you big man from Roblin, who keeps talking from his seat continually. —(Interjection)— It doesn't happen in Roblin? I bet you haven't been in there for a year to find out. —(Interjection)— Well, you know the Member for Roblin got up and criticized this side. Well, perhaps he should phone his cohort from Regina, Dick Collver, and ask him what he feels about it, about this government and their 2.9 percent.

I will have more to say, Mr. Chairman, when we move down to the nursing area but if the Member for St. Boniface wants to know what the rationale was for the 2.9 percent increase all he has to do is to look what happened to the windfall, to all the rich people in this province. That's where it went; that's where it went. Help them out, help them out; they are the ones that need it. They are on the hook.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, I did hope when the Member for Roblin took the floor that he was going to answer the question that was posed by the Member for St. Boniface. I thought that the Member for St. Boniface asked a very rational question. He said, "You have decided that there

will be an increase to hospital budgeting of a global 2.9 percent." And if we try to exclude some of the natural emotion that flowed from the Member for St. Boniface, the basic point that he was asking was, "Where did you get 2.9 percent?" Because you must have looked at the hospital budget and decided that somehow there was extra money there and that they were going to be able to manage without depreciation of services on an increase of 2.9 percent.

Now, I'm looking at the item itself. I am looking at the item itself and I want the Minister to nod if I'm looking at the right item, or maybe the Member for St. Boniface can help me out. The Hospital Program last year is \$264,838,000; the Hospital Program this year is \$269,423,000, which is an increase of \$5 million over \$264 million. —(Interjection)— \$4.5 million on \$265 million, which is 1-¾ percent. My friend, the Member for Seven Oaks, has done the calculation.

I, Mr. Chairman, have every respect for an attempt to pare expenditures and if the Minister had come in and did what we did in our department and said, "This item is out. This particular staff man is not needed. These services should be deleted." And accept responsibility for an analytical analysis of what was being spent, we would know, but we don't know. What we do know is that a directive was issued, or something to that effect, saying that 2.9 percent would be globally allowed and get by as you can.

Under those circumstances, Mr. Chairman, what can one expect to happen within the hospital? The Member for Portage la Prairie started to laugh when the Member for Ste. Rose referred to the light and, Mr. Chairman, he blamed it on the unions. He blamed it on the unions. Instead of blaming it on the unions, why did he not proudly say, "This is not something that we are blaming on the unions. This is something which is good, conservative administration," the increase of 2.9 percent.

Well, Mr. Chairman, I want the Member for Portage la Prairie to tell me which nurse's aide is living high off the hog. What nurses are earning too much money in the Province of Manitoba, so that they are all now being drawn out to Texas? What people in the hospital are getting food that is too good, or is too expensive? What other employees, which we are dealing with, are making too much money in those hospitals and should be making less? Because that's who you are saying are making it impossible to give to the hospitals — not an increases because nobody has suggested an increase — what has been suggested is that the hospitals get the amount of money that they were getting last year. That's all that the Member for St. Boniface has said; the amount of money that they were getting last year. If the honourable member will understand that the value of money has gone down, in order to give them a dollar — which they got last year — you have to give them approximately \$1.08; between \$1.08 and \$1.09 and you will not be giving them one penny more. —(Interjection)—

Well, Mr. Chairman, the honourable member says that they are supposed to tighten their belts. Mr. Chairman, I have asked the honourable member which nurses' aides are living high off the hog. Which orderlies are making too much money? Which nurses in Manitoba have salaries that are out of line with what nurses get in other provinces? Why is it that the doctors can get a 6 percent increase over average salaries of \$60,000 and \$50,000, and orderlies, who may be in the neighbourhood of \$7,000 or \$8,000, should take a decrease? Who should tighten whose belt? —(Interjection)— No, no, Mr. Chairman, that's the issue in this House. That's the issue in this House. Those people on that side say that the people who are earning \$60,000 should buy a bigger sized belt and the orderly, who is making \$8,000 should tighten his belt, that's the issue. And it's no more clearly shown, Mr. Chairman, than in this Estimate.

You know, I really regret that we had an incident in this House. I'm going to tell the Member for St. Boniface because he hasn't got an answer from the Minister; he hasn't got an answer from the Member for Portage la Prairie who blames it on the orderlies asking for an increase in wages, and they didn't get one. He didn't get an answer from the Member for Roblin, who stood up. What the Member for Roblin said was priceless, Mr. Chairman. He said that the government of the Province of Manitoba — listen to what they are spending money on — the Government of the Province of Manitoba have got a research department that is compiling information on the Member for St. Boniface. —(Interjection)— Mr. Chairman, that's what he said. He said, "We've got a research department. We're gathering the information and boy, we can show it to anybody."

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. McKENZIE: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. If I said the government I withdraw that statement. I said, "I have, my research department."

MR. GREEN: No, Mr. Chairman, no. Mr. Chairman, I want to go back to Hansard on this.

MR. McKENZIE: Mr. Chairman . . .

MR. GREEN: He said that they work differently.

MR. McKENZIE: . . . clarify the point. Would the honourable member please stay in his seat till I clarify the point?

If I said that the government had done a research on the Honourable Member for St. Boniface, I withdraw that statement. But let the record be clear, that I, as the MLA from Roblin and some of the research staff in our office and the caucus room, have done a research job on the Honourable Member for St. Boniface, and let that be clear.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, I won't let the honourable member withdraw so easily. —(Interjection)— That's right. I will accept the fact that the Honourable Member for Roblin would like to eat his words. But, Mr. Chairman, he will find them indigestible.

He talked about the caucus and the Cabinet having gone through this thing and that they work much differently than we work. They have regular consultations. And then, Mr. Chairman, either of us is going to be able to be proved wrong. He said, "We have a research department and we're investigating the Member for St. Boniface and we've coupled a big file and wait till we show you what's in this file." You know, I was tempted to get up at that moment and say, if there is a publicly prepared document on the Member for St. Boniface, I'm interested in it. I have arguments with him in caucus, maybe I can use this research against him. —(Interjection)—

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. McKENZIE: I thank the Honourable Member for Inkster for classing me as a member of government. Unfortunately, I am not; I'm a backbencher.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: The honourable member is one of the senior members in this House. He enjoys most, Mr. Chairman, making personal slights of members on this side, about the in-fighting, and other things. Mr. Chairman, maybe I should be uncharacteristically kind and stop right where I am now, with respect to the Honourable Member for Roblin, because frankly, it isn't worth it.

I want to go to what happens in the hospitals, Mr. Chairman. What happens in the hospitals? I want to take an incident which wasn't blown out of proportion, because I think it's an important incident; and give you the Minister's first initial reaction and how this matter could have been dealt with so positively and resulted in such a fiasco for the Minister, himself.

Firstly, the Leader of the Opposition got up, Mr. Chairman, did not make an allegation, he asked the Minister a question, which was a very legitimate question, is it a fact that some of the hospitals have been brought down to changing sheets once a week? And the Minister got up and said, "I can't tell you that. I can't know what's going on in the hospital." Then the Leader of the Opposition got up and said, "Would this be acceptable if it were happening?" And the Minister said a very positive thing, and right thing. He said, "It would be totally unacceptable," and if I'm wrong it is only in degree, that is the reaction that he had to that question, Mr. Chairman. That is the reaction, "totally unacceptable." And the Minister could have handled that situation so well. He could have drawn back and said, "If that's what you have to do I'm telling you that you're still only getting 2.9 percent; but I don't want this practice of changing sheets once a week. I want you to find that money elsewhere, and if you can't, I'll find it for you. Come back to this House, say to the Leader of the Opposition, I want to thank the Leader of the Opposition for bringing this to my attention and I assure you that something is going to be done about it."

What did he do, Mr. Chairman? It's a small incident, but it's characteristic of what's happening on that side. What did he do? He came back and said, "I have learned that sheets are changed Mondays, Tuesday, Thursdays and Fridays," and there wasn't a single person in this House — even the man who sits closest to him and myself, the press, everybody — who thought, "Well, sheets are being changed four times a week." Because he said, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, that's four times.

The Minister came back when he saw that this was not going to be able to hold water, and said, "Everybody should have known that I merely juxtaposed the days and put them in their proper sequence; and obviously if you will take what was obviously meant by what I said," although I could have never figured it out. If it was in a puzzle in a magazine I wouldn't have figured out what he was saying. It was Monday, Thursday, Tuesday, Friday, that's what he meant to say.

Well, Mr. Chairman, why was it not just as logical, if he was putting the days in their proper sequence — and that's the conclusion he expected to be drawn — why didn't he expect me to

draw the conclusion that it would be Monday, the following Tuesday, the following Thursday and the following Friday, once every seven or eight days? —(Interjection)— Yes, it is closer. It happens to be closer. The Minister then — and you know I think that this could have been handled very nicely — then was given particulars, Mr. Chairman, of a woman who went into the hospital on the 12th of the month, stayed in the hospital until the 19th of the month. How many days did that woman stay in the hospital? I would think that most people in this room would acknowledge that she was in the hospital for eight days running — the 12th, the 13th, the 14th, the 15th, the 16th, the 17th, the 18th, the 19th. Even a child doing it on their fingers would get to eight days.

MR. ENNS: Providing you have got eight fingers.

MR. GREEN: Her sheet was changed once on the 14th. The Minister, who by now, had dug himself into a hole from which he could not extricate himself, calculated that her sheet was changed every four days. He said her sheet was changed every four days. How did he figure four days? He left out the 14th, and he left out the 19th, and he said the 15th, the 16th, the 17th, and the 18th. But if the Member for Roblin were lying on that sheet, how many days would he be lying on that sheet continuously. The 14th, Mr. Chairman, the 15th, the 16th, the 17th, the 18th, and the 19th, when she left the hospital. So that woman, despite the Minister's calculations, was lying on the same sheet for six days running.

And not only that, Mr. Chairman, the woman told him that the cancer patient next to her had her sheet changed exactly at the same time, and was lying on the same sheet for the same six days, and wasn't able to say, or didn't say, in any event in the letter, whether her sheet was changed on the 19th.

Now, the honourable members consider that to be a small point. I don't consider it to be a small point, Mr. Chairman. I consider it to be a symptom of what is happening throughout the hospital system; when the honourable member says that the lights are off, that other things are not cleaned as well as they were, all of these things must happen. What bothers me is that the members on the other side are now proud of them, because they say they should happen. —(Interjection)— Well, Mr. Chairman, you see what happens to Conservatives when they are being hurt. They feel that somehow by making little digs on this side of the House, that they have absolved themselves from the problems that they are causing.

Mr. Chairman, the Member for St. Boniface asked where the 2.9 percent is, and the Member for Ste. Rose gave a hint. It is not 2.9 percent, the figure is not 2.9 percent. The figure is approximately, approximately \$15 to \$20 million. I suppose that the hospital budgets, if they were given the same money as they were given last year, would have to have gone up by some \$20 million. The Conservative Party when it came into government was desperate to find \$15 to \$20 million; they needed more than that. They needed more than that, Mr. Chairman. They said on their literature and they went to their constituents and they said that we are going to be able to reduce taxes, income taxes; we are going to give you a reduction in taxes; and we are going to get the money from — Did anybody on that side say hospitals?

I saw lots of Tory literature. Not one of them said hospitals. They said cuts in the Civil Service; they didn't say hospitals. And they said, Mr. Chairman, repeatedly, ad nauseum, "Look, \$40 million was spent on Saunders and \$40 million was spent on Flyer." Now that is more than \$20 million. The trouble with the Conservative literature is that those areas were spending nothing in the last year of expenditure. As a matter of fact, the Minister in charge of the Manitoba Development Corporation is embarrassed, not by an expenditure on the Manitoba Development Corporation, but a profit of \$4,800,000.00.

But, Mr. Chairman, there was this statement that there is all kinds of money. Now for those who are in government, they know that there are certain areas which can be cut, and I will tell the honourable members what they are. You can find money in Highways, it is a block fund. You can reduce the mileage and you can find money there. You can find \$10 million if you want to. But the Conservative government was no way going to decrease the expenditure on Highways, so that left out Highways. You can find money in drainage, not a great deal, but you can find money in drainage because you can build less drains. —(Interjections)— Well, Mr. Chairman, the Conservative Government in no way —(Interjection)— Well, Mr. Chairman, the fact is that the Highways budget, where you could find money if you wanted to dig for it, and the drainage budget, where you could find money if you wanted to dig, both went up. Both went up, not down. So the Conservative Party needed \$15 million. They needed it, Mr. Chairman, for what purpose? To make it possible for someone in Manitoba to inherit one-half a million dollars and not pay any taxes to the government. That person was in big trouble, that was the priority item, and if you have to remove sheets from hospital beds to make it possible for somebody to inherit one-half a million dollars without paying a cent, by God take the sheets off the bed. That is what the Conservative Party said. And when they said that you have to give income tax reductions to people who are earning

over \$50,000 a year and the choice was to give income tax reductions or to give the same amount of money to the hospitals, they said we have to give those people in the higher income groups income tax reductions. They are the ones who financed us into government, and therefore take the sheets off the beds, close the lights, reduce the salaries of the orderlies, but give those people their \$500 a year, who are in the \$60,000 brackets. That is where the 2.9 percent comes from. It is not 2.9 percent; it's what is left after you take off the \$20 million that they had to take off to do exactly what the Member for Ste. Rose said — to fill the pockets of those people whose pockets are already bulging. That is where the money went, that is why the 2.9 percent.

Well, Mr. Chairman, the fact is that those are the figures. The money wasn't —(Interjections)— The Member for Morden, the Member for Portage la Prairie, the Member for Springfield, weren't you told or didn't you tell the public that you could save them millions of dollars in the Manitoba Development Corporation? It was on all your literature. There isn't a penny to be saved in the Manitoba Development Corporation. The Manitoba Development Corporation did not take money on operating expenses for the last one year at least and possibly two years, and this year has again \$4,800,000.00. So you haven't been able to save them a cent on the Manitoba Development Corporation. So where is the money, Mr. Chairman? Where did they pick up this money with which to make it possible for a person to inherit not one-half a million dollars, but \$2 million and not pay a penny in taxes? Where did they get the money to say that those people who are in the highest income groups possible will be given the highest income tax relief possible — they got it from the hospitals. They got it by taking sheets off beds. They got it from closing lights. They got it from not doing the kind of cleaning-up jobs, that were possible under the previous budget. That is where the money came from. —(Interjection)— If the Honourable Member for Roblin will show that there was a decrease in expenditures on beaver dams in the Province of Manitoba as a result of the advent of the New Democratic Party Government, then I will have to

accept that, but there was no decrease. What a difference, Mr. Chairman. What a difference — the New Democratic Party came to power and the first thing it did was to eliminate medical care premiums which taxed the poor, and increase income taxes for the purpose of getting that revenue. The first thing that the Tories did is reduce the income tax, which put the money into the pockets of the rich, and took the sheets off the beds in the hospitals. That is the difference, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. BOYCE: I should take my seat because it is so seldom that the Member for Roblin does speak on his feet, but Mr. Chairman, the Member for Rock Lake, from his seat also, was saying that we are attacking the Minister, and while that is true, the Minister is put in a very very awkward position. We are attacking the Conservative Government. These people went around the province telling how efficient they were, about how they were going to squeeze all the fat out of it.

I am going to give you a case on my particular street, and I have never raised it publicly before. I live on Winnipeg Avenue, right next door to the Health Sciences Centre and Peter Swerhone and his staff over there to do an excellent job of a very large corporation. They have been given a 25-year plan to acquire property roughly from Sherbrook Street to Arlington Street, as it comes on the market.

Right today, this efficient government, that brought in these guys from across the street, Great-West Life. There are two blocks on my street, 35 units, that are owned by the hospital. The hospital is not in the land rental business and I don't fault them for the position they find themselves in. But for the sake of about \$115,000 capital investment to bring these two units up to par, these 35 units stand a distinct chance of being demolished.

Now the Minister from Manitoba Housing and Renewal in his Estimates tells us that public housing, we are subsidizing in public housing, we are subsidizing suites to the tune of \$208 a month. These people don't pay that. The average suite in there — small suites pay \$100.00 a month. Now, this government, the great efficient experts that said there is fat — and the Member for Inkster made an excellent case because that is where you found the money, and people are finding it out. You are squeezing it from the people at the minimum wage, excuse me, from the minimum wage. We can't raise it, we can't afford it. I'm getting rubbed sore on that one. But I am rubbed sore on this, that everytime that somebody makes a good argument or something — what about the Hydro rates? They were calling somebody a hypocrite from their seats.

But, Mr. Chairman, I spoke to the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation, and having worked with him before on other things, I am reasonably sure that the hammer can be stalled on these two blocks on the corner of my street. But it is all the way down the line. They talk about horror stories. We are finding out the horror stories.

The First Minister said that as we went through these Estimates, we would find out horror stories, but the surprise is, Mr. Chairman, is they are printing them, they are making them, they are writing

them, they are bringing them up. And it is drip, drip, drip. It is raised by sheets. I had heard that story. It was brought to my attention also. People are told to bring their own Kleenex or facial tissues, whatever you want to call them, to the hospital and when the nurses ask, "What happens when they run out?" Give them toilet paper. I hear these things, because people tell me. I live right next door to that Health Sciences Centre, and as I said before, and I repeat it, I fault neither the Commission nor the administrative staff of the Health Sciences Centre, nor the Board of the hospital, in either their land acquisition policy, because as they have proceeded to acquire the property as was their mandate, they have tried to be reasonable and reasonable to the people living in the community.

But every case that comes up shows the incompetence of these people. After them going through the province and telling people they are the ones that are experts, they are going to have all the answers to all these problems, and they are going to show efficiency. Well, Mr. Chairman, if those 35 units go down on the corner of my street as the indications are, September 1, this will certainly demonstrate the inability of this government to see any cause of relationship between cause and effect or cost. You take, what is it, it is about \$120,000 capital amortized over 25 years. Because I don't think in any plans that I have seen for the expansion of the hospital in that area, the north side of Winnipeg Avenue and the south side of Winnipeg Avenue, and the south side of McDermot Avenue from Tecumseh and Emily, has absolutely no inclusion in any plans, except for parking lots. Honeysuckle Bakery was burned down; they built a parking lot. The houses from Tecumseh right across from me at 777 Winnipeg fell down after a few years because they didn't maintain it, and they own up right to the property next to me. All they need that property for for the next 25 years is for parking lots. There is absolutely no plan that I have seen in government that there is a projection for a need for physical facilities on those two sides and one side of the other street. And for the money that is necessary — the \$120,000 — and the organization which could handle it, other than the hospital . . . I'm not saying that the hospital should handle it; they shouldn't be in the rental of property business because they have enough problems — especially when the Minister has been given so little money to operate his department.

Mr. Chairman, I say this sincerely. I have said it before and I will say it again, that in many areas this present Minister would do things much the same as I would in many areas, but he is not just faced with what he can do, it's that whole cotton-pickin' government.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Rock Lake.

MR. EINARSON: Mr. Chairman, I just want to make a few comments. I have only been in here for a few minutes, and because of the fact that we have two committees going I have not been apprised of the comments that have been made in this department in the past many days and many hours. But having sat here for just a few minutes this evening, I can't help but make a few comments after listening to the Member for Inkster, and now the Member for Winnipeg Centre.

I want to say in defense of my colleague, the Minister of Health and Social Development, this position that he has found himself, and we have only been in government for — what? — six short months and I want to say, Mr. Chairman, that when we came into office we thought that we could depend on the word from the previous government for the financial position that we found ourselves in.

Unfortunately, Mr. Chairman, we were sadly misled and we were disappointed. And the Minister of Health was one of the areas in which he found himself in a very difficult position.

Let me say, Mr. Chairman, for the record, and I say for myself, as an individual member on the government side, and if I recall and my memory serves me correctly I am given to understand that the previous government suggested that our deficit would be somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$25 million. The then Minister of Finance, when the election was over, found that he was an elected person and I believe — and I will stand to be corrected if I am wrong — that he changed those figures a little bit and probably it would be closer to \$30 million.

When we took over as government on October 24th, my leader, the Premier of this province, asked the gentleman who was responsible for the financial position of this province, asked for an audited statement. And I am given to understand, Mr. Chairman, that we weren't \$30 million in the red, in a deficit — this is only on current — that we were \$129 million in the deficit. That is a far cry from what the Leader of the Opposition was portraying, I believe, previously, before the election was called, and during the election campaign.

Having said that, Mr. Chairman, we are talking about the Department of Health and the health facilities, and the services that we're providing to the people of this province, only to find that all of a sudden we get a cry from the people of the constituency of Flin Flon, and I suggest rightfully so. But, Mr. Chairman, from the Town of Snow Lake, which has a population, I am given to understand, of about 2,000 people, relatively young people in a mining town who require services of a hospital. I want to say, Mr. Chairman, that my colleague and the Minister of Health and Social

Development accepted the kind of responsibility a Minister would do. He went out to Snow Lake. He investigated personally what was going on out there, to find out what the conditions were like to the people of this province.

Mr. Chairman, I don't mind saying so, that I, in my constituency in the constituency of Rock Lake, had some things going with the previous Minister of Health, the Member for St. Boniface. I would like to go a little more and tell you the story about that situation, but I just want it for the record, Mr. Chairman, that my colleague, the Minister of Health, accepted that kind of responsibility, went out to Snow Lake to see for himself what the situation was like in Snow Lake.

Where has the Member for Flin Flon been for the last eight years? I suggest to you, Mr. Chairman, and honourable members opposite have the gall and the audacity to stand up in this House and ridicule this side, and particularly to my member and my colleague, the Minister of Health and Social Development. I think it should be known to the people of Manitoba that he, himself, had the courage and the responsibility to go out there as a human being and as one who is prepared to accept responsibility for the health of the people of this province.

Mr. Chairman, I am given to understand — and the Minister can correct me if I am wrong — we have so many dollars at our disposal and the Minister of Health, like all other departments, was caught in a bind with a financial situation that we thought we were going to have and we didn't have, and so we have so many dollars to work with.

Let me tell you, Mr. Chairman, with all the comments that honourable members opposite want to make, and having listened to the Member for Inkster and particularly the Leader of the Opposition when he starts raising a fuss about changing the bed sheets in a hospital in this province, I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that that is not giving much credibility to the nurses and to the matrons, all the heads of all the wards of all the hospitals in this province. I suggest to honourable gentlemen opposite that you have some questions to answer to.

I say, Mr. Chairman, that my colleague, the Minister of Health, is doing a job that the previous Minister of Health refused to accept his responsibilities. When constituents came into his office, he said, you know, Mr. Chairman, "I've got broad shoulders; I've got thick skin. I'll tell you this is not going to happen. I am going to change your plans for you." This is in certain areas in the Province of Manitoba.

Mr. Chairman, with all due respect to honourable gentlemen opposite, I am prepared to accept my responsibilities as the Member for Rock Lake. I am taking my sacrifices, and I give you this one classic example: In the Province of Manitoba, where the Town of Snow Lake has been deprived of hospital facilities by the previous government, that my colleague, the Minister of Health and Social Development, in his responsible conscience has seen fit to try to do something for those people, and we, on this side, are prepared to accept some sacrifice in order that that can be materialized.

Mr. Chairman, I want that for the record and that to be known to the people of Manitoba. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please, order please. Before I acknowledge the next debater, I have allowed so much latitude and I guess I must apologize to the honourable members in the House; I have kind of let it get away on both sides and I am going to acknowledge the next debater but I am going to ask you to please stay to Resolution 64. We are on the Estimates on Health and Social Development, Manitoba Health Services, No. 1, Administration. The Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I suggested that we stay as much as possible line to line, but this hasn't been done and I certainly intend to answer some of the . . . Especially the last speaker; he wanted to put something on the record and I want to do the same thing.

You know, Mr. Chairman, all of a sudden the whole thing, the whole debate, has changed around. It's the bad New Democratic Party, because they left such a debt, and that's what we have heard for all these months — exactly what we have heard for all these months.

Now, we were told never mind the deficit, but the big spending was caused because we had mismanaged. There was so much fat, so much money wasted. Isn't that right? Exactly, if the money was . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. I would recognize the Honourable Member for St. Boniface. We are getting interruptions from both sides of the House and I think that out of courtesy let's allow the Honourable Member for St. Boniface to continue the debate.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, so we look at the situation. We look at —(Interjection)— You want to yap again? Well, then, shut up. Mr. Chairman, you put something on the record; I am going

to put something on the record.

Now, Mr. Chairman, we have had this debate and we will have this debate again about the irresponsibility of the former government. The only way to do it is to look at department by department and see where all the abuses were. So far there hasn't been one thing that was pointed out in this department — not one — because we came ready to seek this information and we did.

Now, the statement I made is this: That this government was pre-determined that it wanted to save a certain amount of money. I'm not going to try to guess when I'm asking the question. Some people on this side have said, "Well, you wanted to cut down." You know, and my honourable friends said that they have discovered that we owed so much money but they ran and called a special session and reduced the tax for a certain group of people, and he can't get away from that.

You know, any business, and any person that runs a business in this great free enterprising system that we have, and if they are going to review and they want to buy a business or if they take over a business, they are going to go and find out what has to be spent, what the cost is, and they will also look at the revenue. I don't know of a single business that is going to reduce this revenue before investigating and really finding out what can be done.

But I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that if I listened to what was said in the past, that they were convinced that everything was poorly administered, poorly managed and there were all kinds of frills, because that's the statements that were made.

Then we hear in the Department of Health, and this is the instruction that they gave some of their subcommittees on the Task Force, "You've got to not look at how little you can increase but you've got to save \$10 million to \$15 million."

The Minister of Finance, who knows nothing about the Department of Health, who knew nothing, who did not have a chance to find out from his Minister of Health what was needed, said the Minister of Health wanted to give him more money but he said himself — and that was on February 10th — that Mr. Craik had set the target of \$419 million that was going to be spent on this. There wouldn't be any duplication. And the Minister said, "This will be mostly in the administration. We will save all this money on administration and there will be no reduction of services."

Now, Mr. Chairman, we are members of the opposition. We are no longer sitting on that side and we're supposed to go along and be nice fellows, not rock the boat, not bring any questions that we have been asked by our constituents, and we are supposed to just close our eyes and let them have a field day, make accusations that don't stand up, mislead the public and make statements that there will be \$10 million saved. And go along with one person who said, "That's what you are going to spend," and then have the gall or the ignorance to say the services will not be curtailed.

Well, Sir, this is not what we're here for. And it is our job. We're not criticizing the Minister of Health personally, and he knows that because last year when I was careful to say, "It's not his fault; he doesn't run the department," he was incensed and he says, "I must take the criticism." And we're looking at his Estimates; we're not looking at the Estimates of the Province of Ontario, we're looking at the Estimates in Manitoba and, more specifically at this time, at the Manitoba Health Services Commission.

These were the statements that were made and then, as we go along, we find out we want to ask the first question that I asked, that everybody is asking. First we determined today that the Commission had nothing to do with it. I ignore the Commission; I'm talking about the commissioners now — the people that said on a Crown corporation that are there to bring in independent non-partisan approach. And my honourable friend made a big thing about a certain area, that nothing was done. I don't even know if they applied for a commission. I don't know if they had, at the time, something that was brought in by the former administration, 20 percent of owner's equity.

I don't know if it was recommended. I know that none of these things came to me from the Commission, the Commission staff, I don't know. It's possible and it's misleading if you're going to start on every area, but if that's what they want, we'll do that.

Now these were the statements. Then the Minister before finding out — because he made some statements that he retracted these last few weeks, he made certain — now he said that there will be no more frills; and that's the question. I'm hoping that he's writing this because eventually I hope that he's going to answer. I want a list of frills that were found in this department, in the hospitals and Personal Care Homes. You know we bring in examples, it's petty stuff in a way, but you add all that together and you look — what kind of a cheap outfit are we running, when you're changing the sheets and so on, and then again even on that the Minister stood here and he says, "And that was done under the former administration."

Remember the Minister of Highways was saying — what did he call me, "dirty sheet Larry" — and I found out that that wasn't the case at all; that went after the date, after one of the exercises

that we had the hospital do, they did come and try to save money. You're bound to find some crazy stuff when it comes in. I think one of them would say, "Grab all the little pieces of soap, melt them together and make more bars of soap in the hospital." They have patients with different diseases, and all that, you bring all the soap together, melt it and make more bars of soap, and this is where we're going to save money. Well, Sir, there's a limit. You know, bring your own kleenex and if they haven't got kleenex, use the roll of toilet paper. What are you going to save? Is there that much difference between kleenex and a roll of toilet paper? You know, these kinds of things.

Now, Mr. Chairman, this is what we're talking about today. Now, we don't know, this is just the tip that we can see. We don't know what's happening, and I defy the member to make the same statement next year when we look at this. Because first of all, to the credit of the hospitals, it has gone down — there's no doubt the standard has gone down — like for instance, if you don't hire people to replace those who are sick and you say, "Well, I hope those that are left to pick up the slack will do a good job." Then you tell the nurses, "There's no money for overtime. So if you're not quite finished at 5 o'clock, drop it, drop it." Exactly, this is what we're telling the nurses in Manitoba — not the government directly — but indirectly because of their actions.

There's one statement that will not be able to be made, that these people did not try and are not trying. But certainly the standard is going down, and all right, you can always stand a little more, a little more, and a little more until finally, what kind of a hospital are you going to run? But that's only part of it, Mr. Chairman. Because I guarantee — and nobody has taken me up on that — that you will see in the first month when the budget comes in and they give this to the Commission, you will see that there will be a big deficit, because some people will not go down and say, "First of all we see dollar signs and we will go at 2.9 percent," or whatever it is; and it is not 2.9 percent, and all the hospitals are not the same.

Now this is the statement that we're making. Isn't that our job? My smiling friend on the other side made a big thing about Snow Lake. Where was I about Snow Lake, and the Minister had gone? Did he go to the other places? Doesn't my honourable friend remember that in 1976 there was a five-year program announced in this House and Snow Lake was included in there? Snow Lake was approved by the former government and we're giving the big claim to fame that this government had the guts to go and see that it was bad, and they're going to build a hospital in Snow Lake. All they did was lift the freeze on one institution.

Now I claimed and I stated that that was a P.R. job on one area that raised hell, raised hell —(Interjection)— I don't remember everything about all the individual hospitals. But I can tell you this, I can tell you what was approved in 1976 and what was done, including Snow Lake — yes, including Snow Lake — I can tell you —(Interjection)— You know, why Snow Lake before Arborg? Where's the Member for Arborg? Well, you don't like that? You don't like that. —(Interjection)— Well, it's too bloody bad, I feel sorry for you, but I'm going to tell you anyway.

Arborg was hospital renovation to all linkage and conform to fire safety regulations, but that's not important. An addition of a new 40-bed Personal Care Home which replaced a former 46-bed Personal Care Home damaged during the 1973 flood. Well, that's frozen, not by the former government, by this government. The same one that lifted the freeze on Snow Lake; and as I said the Minister invited the press to accompany him to make a big thing out of that. —(Interjection)— Why doesn't he invite the press and go to Arborg and tell Arborg that it's frozen — not for 90 days — but twice 90 days, plus 30 days?

Then Ashern, that was another one that was approved; hospital renovation for diagnostic services in heating, provision of health and social department, space in addition of a new 20-bed Personal Care Home. The program was under discussion and it was working.

Birtle — where's Birtle? Isn't Birtle in one of your constituencies? —(Interjection)— Well, I'll come to that. If it's there, I'll tell you. Birtle, is there anybody from Birtle? Isn't that one of your places? Where's the Member for Birtle? —(Interjection)— Pardon? Who? Well, I just wanted you to tell me who it was, because I thought it was one of your members. I wonder if he would say it's not important, the Birtle one was not important. Don't go away, we might even cover you here.

Boissevain, who's the Member for Boissevain? Who's the Member for Boissevain? —(Interjection)— You have them all, okay, well I'll list a list of yours. Boissevain, that's a joke, Mr. Chairman. That's a joke. A new 12-bed hospital replacing a 14-bed hospital that was — where has he gone; I've lost the two of them, oh no, here's my friend the compiler of statistics and I'll be very pleased and I'm honoured that I should attract so much attention and I'm just very anxious and eager to debate those; I wish you'd make them public as soon as possible.\$

Carman, where's Carman, where's Carman? —(Interjection)— Pardon? In 1976, yes. What was it, oh, in 1977? Are you deaf? 1976 is the same thing as 1977, is it the same thing? —(Interjection)— Mr. Chairman, you know he's pretty weak so he doesn't want to accept that. Renovation to hospital to reduce acute care beds and upgrading surgical department, is that important? —(Interjection)— I tell you exactly the official thing that was promised in 1976.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. Order please. Again, gentlemen, I would like to remind you that we are on the Department of Health and Social Development, Clause 64, Manitoba Health Services Commission. Clause 8. (1) Administration. Can we possibly stay to what the item. . .?

MR. DESJARDINS: That's exactly Administration, this is what was approved — recommended and approved by the Commission, by the government of the day and passed in this House in 1976 — not the year of the election — two years ago, Mr. Chairman.

Crystal City, there's no taker for Crystal City? Dauphin, where's the Member for Dauphin? All right, I haven't got the amount here, I'll have to come to that.

Deloraine, Emerson, Eriksdale, Flin Flon, Gillam, Gladstone — that's my friend across the way — Grand Rapids, Hamiota, Lac du Bonnet, McGregor, McCreary, Melita, Pilot Mound, Portage la Prairie — I lost that friend too — Rivers, Rosburn . . .

A MEMBER: There's not a Personal Care Home there.

MR. DESJARDINS: Ste. Anne, St. Claude, Selkirk, Shoal Lake and Mr. Chairman, here is Snow Lake, Teulon, Winnipegosis, and then the Baptist Federation for new beds, that my friend was yelling for more beds. The Health Science Centre, including psychiatric beds and the cancer, Holy Family Home, Manitoba Oddfellows, Mount Carmel, St. Boniface Hospital laundry — that's my own constituency — St. Joseph's Home, Seven Oaks, Tache Nursing Centre which was built, Concordia, Municipal and then I can give you the figures, Mr. Chairman, and Misericordia was included in there also.

So that was approved two years ago, Mr. Chairman. Some of these were built; I don't know exactly which ones were built, some of them were built. Then they had to apply to the Commission and when the recommendation was made it was done by the Commission — that's another point I want to make — I repeat the same thing as I said this afternoon. There was no partisan decision because that was looked at by the Commission and the staff of the Commission who made their recommendation, and the Chairman is sitting right here and ask him if there were any changes or if he was ordered, or suggested that there should be any constituency or any other place. I'm ready to take that chance. I'm ready to take that chance.

Now, Mr. Chairman, we are told — and you all saw the article in Saturday's paper — about the Health Sciences Centre, and we were talking that nobody is going to suffer. The people who are in some of Winnipeg's hospitals are concerned that they won't be able to guarantee current levels of patient care within the strict budget guidelines set this year by the Provincial Government. I didn't say that. "Already attrition is hitting most city hospitals. Plans have been made to close down beds. Summer vacation replacements will not be hired. Surgery is being postponed and many patients face increase in fees for private rooms." That's the administrator of the hospital that's saying that.

He also said he could not figure out where the government got the 2.9 percent for the hospitals. "No, I'd have to go on record," he says, "as saying we can't work with it, not without something being sacrificed." The Health Minister was interviewed and he said, "The Tory Government meant business when it laid down the 2.9 percent budget, that the restraint program for the hospitals isn't just an exercise. They, the hospitals, haven't had the challenge put on them before," — which I reject very categorically — the Minister said, adding, "It is no longer a challenge if you say it's only an exercise that we're going to ease up on it," but he was easing up today.

He said, "There was knowledge that many hospital administrators and other officials are optimistic they can live with the reduced budget." We'll see when this comes in. Then they're talking about staff cuts and bed closures and standard of care.

Now let me tell you what the nurses are saying, and remember that you're lucky that the AIB is still operating. Just mark my words, what's going to happen in the field of health next year. Just remember that I'm prophesizing all kinds of strikes, because that's going to happen. Oh, you're smiling. They're waiting and you'll see what's going to happen. —(Interjection)— I beg your pardon? Well, all right, you'll see what happens. You'll see what happens. You'll be here for a year anyway. —(Interjection)— No, I won't enjoy it. I won't. Sure, I'll say I told you so, definitely, because you don't push people around the way you're doing now and think that they're not going to stand up. —(Interjection)— What's that? I don't know. Mr. Chairman, that's possible. —(Interjection)— Well, Mr. Chairman, should I let him make a speech and then answer, or should I continue? —(Interjection)— Pardon? Do I have the floor?

Now I'll tell you, Sir, some of the things that the nurses are telling us. First of all, they'll tell us that there will be a shortage of nurses in a few years from now; and it's not that long ago that we had a very real shortage of nurses. — (Interjection) — That's right, maybe now we have more nurses than we can use, especially if you don't replace them — the attrition — if anybody quits

nobody is there to replace them. If they're sick they're not replaced.

Now, there is one area — and the nurse was telling us — is that in one area where there are 19 patients, there is one place where they can draw water. You know, some of these things with those programs not going ahead, they are positive that the standards are slipping. There is no more money, or very little money, for in-service education. The cafeteria is closed. You know, little things, but that is how desperate the boards are to try to play ball with the government and reduce the thing. So the cafeterias for the nurses are closed.

Now, there is no money for the increment that is coming to them; there is no money there at all. And this is where I got the information that the employers and some members of the board are telling them, hoping that they are going to strike, because they are going to save money. Well, they are away; they won't have to pay them.

Thompson — the Special Care Treatment is closed and they have to be transferred to Winnipeg. What do they think that Special Care unit was . . . ? We're talking about the north. The people don't want to go up north, and we close their Special Care Program up there and they have to flown to Winnipeg for that. That makes a lot of sense. And this was in an area where they saved \$7,000 by not putting the air-conditioning on.

There is no overtime. They are told, "Just leave exactly when things are finished. If you quit at five o'clock, quit. If you are not finished, it's too bad."

Now, you mean to tell me that this is conducive to high standards in any hospital? You mean to tell me that, Sir. And you mean to tell me that we're unfair when we bring this to the attention of the House and the Minister? What are we supposed to do when we debate these Estimates? What are we supposed to do, just bow and cheer and then go without saying a word at all? Just go ahead and vote in favour . . . ?

My friend, the Minister of Tourism, Recreation and Cultural Affairs, nods his head and he says, "That's exactly what you are supposed to do." Well, I've got news for him; this is not what we're going to do.

Now the morale of the hospitals is lower than it has ever been between management and staff. So, Mr. Chairman, this is why we are worried; we are concerned because we feel first of all that it is not realistic, that it will not be done. The Minister can repeat until he is blue in the face that the standards are not suffering and that they will be forced and they will have to live up to. They will have to stay within their budget. I say that is not true. He controls but I tell you right now that that is not going to happen because there will be so much deficit and they will have to pay it, and the standards will go down continually.

Remember, Mr. Chairman, that when this thing started that all this was because of the mismanagement and the rich programs. Now, again, this is another question I have asked my honourable friend, to give us a list of frills that he found in the hospitals and personal care homes — not the abuse, I am talking about the frills — and then also tell us where, you know, is this 2.9. And I always get back to that because, for the life of me, I don't know who decided on that and I want to know if it was in consultation with the MMA or the nurses, or the boards of the hospitals, or the commissioner, or even Dr. Johnson, the medical advisor, or some of their defeated candidates such as Dr. Krahn, who is very disappointed with what is going on.

So, Mr. Chairman, I hope that the Minister will answer some of these questions and maybe he can prove to us that we are worried for nothing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. MCKENZIE: I would like to reply to the Honourable Member for Inkster, who made an allegation and charge earlier that I did not reply to the question that was raised by the Honourable Member for St. Boniface regarding the 2 percent increase.

I believe, if my memory serves me correctly, that the Honourable Member for Inkster said that my judgment is not worth the time of the House, and I'm very sorry to hear the Member for Inkster make that kind of a charge under the heat of debate, or words to that effect.

But I would like the record to show, Mr. Chairman, in answer to the Honourable Member for Inkster, that I don't see how I, as the Member for Roblin constituency, can commit myself on a 2.9 percent budget increase when half of my constituency has no health delivery system of any kind. So that would be my reply. It's the old Ethelbert Plains part of Roblin constituency that doesn't have a health delivery system, as much as I regret it. That's why I didn't answer the Honourable Member for Inkster, because I don't think I could make a fair judgment or assessment on that subject. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for Roblin has a habit of indulging in

great exaggerations when he said now, and half an hour ago, that there is no health care delivery system in half of his constituency. I wonder if, on reflection, he realizes just how terrible gross an exaggeration that is. Indeed, if the truth were known, if my honourable friend wanted to know the truth, I am sure he would come quickly to realize and to admit that in communities in his riding and in immediate proximity to his riding, such as the Town of Roblin, and the Town of Grandview . . . —(Interjection)— Well, that's part of your constituency. The Town of Gilbert Plains, the Village of Ethelbert, that in the course of the past several years there have been new personal care homes — and this is part of health care delivery — built in Gilbert Plains; isn't that right? —(Interjection)— Well, it's immediately on the border of your riding. I'm sure it takes in some of the trading area. Many of the people that farm and live in the southwest part of your constituency do their daily shopping, or their weekly shopping, in Gilbert Plains. Still others would shop and get their repairs and do their general trading in Grandview, and others in Roblin, and others in Ethelbert.

Now, I repeat, in this decade, in the 1970s, new modern personal care facilities built in Gilbert Plains, in Grandview, I believe not more than two years old — maybe three at most — a personal care home in Ethelbert and that's part of health care delivery. I would be surprised if attached to the personal care home if there were not an ambulance arrangement of some kind because I find that in most rural towns where we have built personal care facilities, where the public of this province has built personal care facilities through the instrument of government, that arrangements were made within the first year or two for stationing of an ambulance right on the grounds of the personal care home. And I can name some towns that have arranged in that way.

My honourable friend, the Member for Roblin, I don't wish to imply that he is old but he has been around for a long time, I think he would agree, and therefore he must have some kind of basis for relating his experiences and making comparisons. We have set a pretty fast pace of planning, development and construction of health care facilities in this province, particularly in those districts and towns which were somewhat behind in terms of amount and quality of health care services and health care facilities.

In addition to that the Member for Roblin studiously avoided any reference whatsoever to home care and I think that he would agree that in the Parklands region that home care was a program that was given a lot of emphasis and a lot of encouragement and support. I know for a fact, by speaking to rural municipal councillors and Reeves in the Dauphin area, that it was held in high regard as a new type of health care delivery program and therefore I would be surprised if it were much different in the area of Ethelbert, Grandview and Roblin.

So right there, Mr. Chairman, we have concrete examples of new health care delivery efforts that were made and carried through to construction, and carried through to implementation right in the honourable member's own constituency, and there are many other constituencies like that.

In light of that fact, one really has to wonder just what in the world the Member for Roblin is referring to, except perhaps he is trying to make the implication, without saying so too directly, that in a town or a village of 500 souls and surrounding treating area, that it is not good enough to build a new personal care home without building a new hospital within the same two or three year period.

The community of Ethelbert has been there for three-quarters of a century and the fact that a personal care home of any consequence, modern as to service and facility, was built within very recent years, therefore it's just somehow impossible to comprehend just what the argument is that the Member for Roblin is putting forward.

By the way, it is also germane to put out that Dauphin, which is the regional trading centre for that whole area, that approval was given for a multi-million dollar hospital expansion at Dauphin — renovation, upgrading and expansion — to serve the more intensive care cases that come from people ill and requiring intensive care in that whole region.

In addition to that, of course, to the north the Town of Swan River has, I think, just about as good a cross-section and balance of health care facilities, which means a balance as between acute care and extended care.

So my honourable friend, the Member for Roblin, surely has to take an overall geographic approach, which he has studiously failed to do. He picks on one village in his whole constituency, ignoring what was done in every other town in that constituency with respect to personal care facilities and home care as a complementing health care delivery service. And all in all, I think that he should just brush-up and take a refresher short-course on just what has been accomplished in the decade of the 1970s.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. MCKENZIE: I thank the Honourable Leader of the Opposition for his comments and his sentiments on this subject matter that we are dealing with, and I thank him and his government

for the senior citizens housing project that they put into Ethelbert. But I still can't justify that a senior citizens' housing is a health delivery system. I class a personal care home and hospital care of that type of a nature as a health delivery system. Certainly senior citizens' housing is part and parcel of it but not in the significance that I am relating the subject, and I thank the government for the hospital they put into the Town of Roblin during their years of office. And over the years I have stood up here many times and thanked all governments' including the Liberals when they were government and the other governments. All governments do a great deal for the people of this province and it is on the record. I have no quarrel with that at all.

But what got my dander up in the debate tonight is the former Minister of Health challenging and tirading the present Minister and when he had all kinds of opportunities as the Chairman of the Manitoba Health Services Commission and as the Minister of Health to deliver something to his Liberal friends, who were still there between Dauphin and Swan River — and there is no health delivery system in there. Let the record be straight, except for a personal care home in Ethelbert. And I apologize to the honourable members opposite; I know as much as we need personal care home services, I still don't class that as health because those people that are occupying . . . —(Interjection)— No, in most cases the people that are occupying the senior citizen housing in this province are in reasonably good health. I apologize; I am talking about senior citizens' housing. Those people, generally speaking, are in good health and in most cases don't need a doctor, or nursing, or medication, unless there is an exception.

The quarrel is with the people I represent, who live in that area, and some of those people have been there before the turn of the century. Before the turn of the century, people have been living between Dauphin and Swan River, and they are not second rate citizens. Sure, they are the bastions, as I said earlier, of the Ukrainian community; I daresay the first Ukrainian settlers in Manitoba settled in that area. But why governments historically . . . ? And that's why I quarrel with the former Minister of Health, who was a Liberal and had a chance to . . . —(Interjection)— No, but he had a chance to deliver something to his Liberals. That still was a Liberal bastion up until . . . —(Interjection)— No, Mr. Krawchuk won that seat up 'til that time. That was known as Liberalism, and I retrace the history of the great Nick Hryhorczuk and his son, Mike Hryhorczuk was an Attorney-General in this Legislature. They both sat here. And surely that man there, the Member for St. Boniface, as a Liberal, and I know he is no longer a Liberal. At least he wants to get that garment off, if he can, on this matter. Surely, he as a Minister and as a Chairman of the board, should have delivered some service under the health and delivery care of that great Ukrainian bastion of this province, the area between Dauphin, and he didn't do it. That was my quarrel in the debate earlier when he was attacking my Minister. I thought it was very unfair for him, especially as a former Liberal, to not deliver some kind of a health delivery system to that Liberal bastion, which is now no longer Liberal, and of course the reason it is no longer Liberal is because he didn't do anything there as a Liberal and he didn't do anything as an NDP, so that's why they put me in there. I guarantee, as I said earlier in my remarks, my Minister and this government will deliver a health delivery system of some kind to the people between Dauphin and Swan River, and I guarantee you that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Flin Flon.

MR. BARROW: Mr. Chairman, I would like to say a few words on the Snow Lake episode, if I may. They seem to take a lot of delight and run down Snow Lake and the Minister should have done this and should have done that. But let's look at the whole situation. The priority up there in Snow Lake was never a hospital, it was a road. The big thing there for years and years — I lived there for six years — and what would happen, Mr. Chairman, Buck Witney would go up there every election and promise them a road, and he did, he put 10 miles in every four years. We built that road into Snow Lake, Mr. Chairman, and Snow Lake has been visited by almost every Minister of the former government. Our Leader was up there several times and they will bear this out. A hospital was not mentioned. In fact, an airstrip was the second priority deal.

We had a general meeting in Snow Lake and they had 500 people in the community club who knew how bad this hospital situation was, because when we found out a few short months before the election, we moved on it and there was no twisting arms, there was no sweat' we were going to build a hospital. And then you froze it. You said we didn't need a hospital, without even seeing it. When they had this meeting, Mr. Chairman, they sent an invitation to the Minister of Health and the Minister of Northern Affairs, and I got an invitation, and I was the only one who went. They didn't have the courtesy to acknowledge the invitation. And what happened at that meeting, it was beautiful. The women got together and said, "If there is no hospital there will be no work. We will picket every mine in Snow Lake." This put an enormous amount of publicity on this, and that is exactly how that situation went.

When you say, go back eight years, I am honestly telling you it was not a priority in eight years, but if it was eight years, what about the eight years prior to that again? You know, we could go

on and on and on on this hospital thing.

But another thing that you really let us down on was the extension of the hospital in Flin Flon. We were going to extend that for an extensive care home and the hospital itself have invested \$200,000 in buying property and blasting, excavating for the extension. You froze that too. And if ever an extensive home was needed, it is Flin Flon. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. DOMINO: I would like to have some advice on procedure. Might I be able to ask the Member for Flin Flon a question at this point? Then could I speak? Thank you.

I have heard a lot about Snow Lake and I think it is time that we talked about Snow Lake in the context of what has been said about the Snow Lake Hospital over the last few years. We heard earlier in this Session, members across there get up and yell and scream and pretend that suddenly the Snow Lake Hospital had started to fall apart after October 11, and that it was suddenly an urgent matter, and now we hear from the member that a hospital was promised just before the last election — promised along with 45 other institutions and no funding was granted or anything. I would suggest to you that hospital wouldn't have been built if this government would have been returned. I could suggest to you also that there are 8 or 10 beds in the Snow Lake Hospital, is that correct? Nod your head if it is correct? Okay. Let me just quote from the former Minister of Health. I'm quoting now when he is talking about hospitals. He said this in 1975 in this House, Page 3226 of Hansard: "I am serving notice on you that I'll be a heck of a lot tougher, especially when it comes to acute bed hospitals because I will never approve these eight-bed hospitals any more and if they ever lose their doctor, they will lose it and that's it, and in fact, if I can convince my colleagues, I will try to close some of these hospitals. It doesn't make sense to have eight beds or ten beds or fifteen-bed hospitals so this is the direction and that's what it's going to be."

That is a quote from the former Minister of Health and I suggest to you, he always talks about how consistent he was, he wouldn't have built that hospital. Now we have got a little flexibility. You've got a Minister of Health at this time who went up there and saw a problem and who is going to solve it for you. You wouldn't have got it built with that guy. But you forget these kinds of things, it's convenient, because all you care about is the immediate political gain. You're not really concerned about the needs of the people. —(Interjection)— No way. You will have to go a long way before you'll convince me. The member, I'm sure, would like to get up right now and explain how he was going to build a hospital after he said that. —(Interjection)— There wouldn't even be any sheets if it was up to him.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, the young and eager rookie is at it again. He has no understanding of the work of government at all. Two minutes before he stood up, "Is that right that they approved a commission," he asked the Minister. And he got the answer.

Now, Mr. Chairman, this is not "if" and the things we were going to do and so on, these were things that were approved and announced officially. The money was put in there. It's a lie to say there was no money.

A MEMBER: It was part of the deficit . . .

MR. DESJARDINS: The first two years, there wasn't as much as we thought the first year, because it took quite a while to get these plans out and so on and this work was being done. For instance, if you had some, before the freeze, you can thank us because it was done before, such as Tache Hospital and the St. Joseph's Home and others. It was announced and you can say all you want it wasn't going to be done; it was announced, it was being done. The commission was told, "Go ahead." Now, I don't know what else you have to do. Everything was read and when we come to that I'll read every single one again and I'll give you the amount and the total amount was going to be spread out in five years and my honourable friend, the Minister, said today that there has been a reduction in the staff and some of them were the people working on that. There were about 200 and — where's my book?

The Administration Program went from professional consultants that we hired to do this work in this five years — the amount in 1977-78 voted was 463 and now it is down to 139. So, you know, it is something to accuse of government that they are not interested in people, they're not interested in that, but to say that programs that were announced, programs that were going ahead with, you know, is something else.

Now the member quoted me, and I thank him for it, I thank him for it. I definitely believe in the statement and I would like to say the same thing again and I would like to say to the present

Monday, June 5, 1978

Minister that you have got to be careful. It will take a lot of guts to do it, but in most instances, do not approve — and I say this and I hope that everybody in Manitoba hears me — don't approve these hospitals of eight beds. Don't approve them any more. If you have to have some kind of community clinics, that might be the idea, but don't approve. Now you are talking about one exception, an isolated area that was approved by us and that was approved by the Minister, that you say would not approve it. It was approved. It was recommended because of the isolated situation. But in general, I say that we should . . . First of all, he said that I said they there would be too many acute beds. That was something that we stated. We were alone. People were yelling, "More acute beds," and that was wrong because it was personal care beds that we need. Now everybody agrees with this. I mean, you have to replace some of them but we do not need more acute beds in Manitoba. That is accepted by everybody now. A few years ago and I remember my friend here was the Minister, they were yelling at him and saying you have got to have more acute beds and the whole system was conducive to that because we were not receiving any help from the Federal Government, no cost sharing. They had a program; they were cost sharing only for acute beds, not for construction but for the maintenance, for the costs on these beds, until we had all these meetings and there was going to be some flexibility because they, too, realized that.

You had a Minister, a Conservative Minister with a lot of guts, in Ontario, who went around the rural areas and who said — mind you, he couldn't make it stick in all instances, the pressure was too much — but he went around and he said, we're going to close these hospitals. And it is a known fact, and ask the medical profession, if you can work in a hospital of eight acute beds. You should not have it. You would be a heck of a lot better off if you transport people 25 miles or so and have a hospital of about 25 beds. And that should be, in general, the minimum. Of course there are some exceptions when you are in an isolated area like Snow Lake, and that was approved.

So don't think that you embarrass me and if these are the kinds of things you have, please read it because I am very proud of these things that I've said and I agreed with them and I agree with them now.

Now, my honourable friend with whom we have some debates before has got this cute trick. The main thing that he wants to do tonight is to repeat again that I became an NDP from a Liberal. That is the main thing that he wants. He is not interested in the rest of the things he said. That's his way of saying that. Well, I say to my honourable friend that no matter what party the government of the day is, I think that his suggestion that you should try taking care of your friend is a bad one. And he is right, we didn't do that. We didn't do that at all. We had a commission and this is what I was saying this afternoon, that the **ommission was independent, the commission looked at needs. Half the time I didn't even know who the member for the constituency was. Maybe I'm a poor politician; maybe I should have known but I didn't know who the member was and I can repeat again that at no time was that ever stated or suggested to the commission, "This is one of our members, take care of them." And the people who were sitting in this House before know me and they know that was done when I was the Minister of ' Tourism, Recreation and Cultural Affairs in the construction that they had through the Lottery, that 25 percent, up to \$20,000, they know how much they got and at no time was partisanship a factor in selecting this.**

Now, if my friend wants to say that I failed because I did not help my friends and the members of the party that I belong now or that I belonged to, well then, he is highlighting the fact exactly the way I think it should be.

Now he is saying, I don't remember all the hospitals. Remember that at one time when I was sitting in Opposition I repeated this in so many speeches they used to call me the 20 percent kid. I was against the people having to pay the owner's equity that we have for 20 percent. Now it might be, I don't know about Ethelbert Clinic. I don't even know if they wanted a hospital; I don't know at this time, sitting on this side, if they needed a hospital for 500 people, I don't know, when there are some around the area. I don't know first of all that they had the owner's equity because before they could do anything under the former government and for a while under us, they had to produce the owner's equity; they had to bring everything to the commission and say, "That's it," before it would even be considered. So in all fairness, I think we should find that out. Maybe they did. I'm not saying they did. That was number one.

Now, did they want this because they had certain costs to pay in certain areas? Did they want that? Now, did the commission feel that it was a priority? But we are saying exactly this, that we need. . . We're not saying that we were perfect. We know that it costs money, but we

Monday, June 5, 1978

had a five-year program that we announced, and not a couple of months before the election, two years before the election or a year and a half before the election, this was announced. And we were proceeding with this, exactly with that.

So, you know, it had nothing to do with the election; we were going ahead. It's not us that came in and said, well, you know, you are going to freeze that. It is not us, it is this government, the same government who said that my Leader was scaring the old people by saying then that these things would be curtailed; the same government whose backbencher in the back who has been crying and yelling and demonstrating, certainly as much as we have anyway, in the past, for more beds — and he is here today and he can speak for himself, more beds in personal care homes. We didn't call for this freeze at all.

We think this is the difference. On this side they say, "Dollars first, need after." We looked at need. Of course it cost a lot of money and it is not an invention for the Premier of this province to stand up and say, "We've got to find out how much it cost." The construction is a drop in the bucket. It is year after year after year of paying for this for these patients. It is going to cost an awful lot of money. It is going to cost a lot of money that you won't have to put in there because every time — and this is one of the questions we are going to find out — we're going to find out before this exercise is over how much they paid for any institution that started during the last year, not because of change of government that started, because it was only part of it. And every year you build in and the following year, if you operate it for a month or so, you have to multiply that and look at the whole thing and you have to decide and it takes a couple of years to say, okay, this is what it should cost.

And it is going to cost money. This is the exercise and we wouldn't be fighting with you if things would come up straight.

Your government is saying money first, dollars first, need after. We're not putting words in your mouth, this is what you're saying, repeatedly. You're saying that we wasted money but now you admit that we didn't waste money in this department, not that much anyway. Therefore, if you admit that, well then don't talk about the deficit. You either say that comes first or we don't do it, you know, there's no choice. There's no other choice than that, you either do it or you don't. If you don't do it you're going to save all kinds of money.

You might be able to reduce taxes and this is our point. But you're reducing taxes on who? You know, there's 20 percent of the people in this province that are in the upper bracket and that's about 29,000 nearly 30,000, that's only 20 percent of these people, so that takes up anybody that makes more than that. Then you have 20 percent who makes what, around \$7,000; I think it's less than that, about \$5,000 to \$7,000, but your policies unfortunately are hurting these people more than anybody else. And this is what we're saying when you keep on saying, that first of all I don't think that in general the Manitobans had it so good, or Canadians had it so good, we're a bunch of cry-babies. We've got a damn good country, except those that aren't working and except those that — if we're going to take these programs — but in general I'm talking about the fact it's been a good place to live and you've been able to run a business. The NDP notwithstanding, you've been able to start a business if you have the guts to want to do it.

I've been fortunate, I'm in that 20 percent, the top 20 percent and I don't like to pay taxes anymore than you. I squawk everytime I get a bill, but I'll gladly pay taxes for certain percentage, certain groups in our society that cannot help themselves. I'll pay that. I don't like it, but I mean for retarded children, you see misery around so much, for senior citizens and so on, and these are some of the programs that we have.

You know, for the future, there's long-range planning also. This is changing. We have approximately the same number of people that are not supporting themselves, that is you know, below 17 or so and then over 65, but you have many more of the younger people and less of the senior citizens and now it's changing around. I'll say something that my friend will quote back to me but I'll say it anyway; where any government has got to start saving money is in education. It's t's going to be tough because you're going to have the Association of School Teachers and so on, who are not going to let you, it's going to be tough. They will want more standards, but if you feel that you've got so much money after all, and I said that when I was sitting on this side many times, there's a limit to what we can do. Maybe the limit is not exactly the same, I don't see it the same as this government.

I thought I was pretty conservative, but apparently I'm in the right party, I'm a real radical, because I don't think we can live with what is suggested here today. I'm saying that there's less people going to schools and so on and that has to reflect in there, we've got to save money in there. But to think that you're going to reduce the health care, forget it, if you plateau you'll be lucky and you've got to cut down.

I'm not saying, you know, that we're right in everything, we think we are. We wouldn't be worth our salt if we didn't think we were and I have no doubt that you think that you're right, but then this is what we want. Call a spade a spade. You know, you started saying it was too rich, there

Monday, June 5, 1978

were too many frills, well don't play games and accuse us of wanting to play to the gallery, just make a statement, that's the end of it, that's the end of it. Those that are for it, fine, you say that's a frill.

Beds should be changed only once a week. Well, I don't think that too many people will die because the beds are changed only once a week. Who am I to say that it should be every day, or second day, or third day, but if that is your decision, stick with it, stick with it, don't play games and try to say it's not true, or it's our fault and all that kind of stuff, or blame on the boards, or blame it on the poor nurses or the people on the wards, stick with it.

If you feel that if one of the Ministers said cut the grass in front of the hospital once a week instead of twice a week, all right, do that. A lot of people will agree — I'll agree with you in certain areas because I think the service is more important. Cut down on some administration, that's fine, but you know, don't tell us that you don't find anything, any fat in the department and it wasn't mismanaged, but then go outside and make statements like it's about time that this be done, it's about time that there's a challenge to these people, when you know they've had the same challenge, that's what I objected for and this is why I'm on my feet so much today. Because, of course, I'm going to defend our record because I think I'm just as honest as any one of you and I will fight for what I think is right, and I expect you to fight for what you think is right.

You know, we don't have to go on forever, we're going forever because you're on every side of every issue. You're on every side of every issue. You know there's certain things that I don't agree with my colleagues here . . . I didn't chastize the government for charging people that are in acute beds that are waiting for a bed in a personal care home. I agree that this should be done. You know, I'm not going to be a hypocrite, that's what I wanted to do when I was on this side, but in those days we could not do it. It wasn't that we were poor managers, it was that the Federal Government would not go along with it. The Federal Government say if they are in these beds, all right, you don't charge them anything, it's covered under hospitalization, but now the funding is different, you can do it and more power to you.

Now, I'm not going to criticize for the increase in personal care, what I criticize is again that damn trial balloon that was sent by the Task Force first and there was no doubt that the increase was too large and then it was cut down, but now I'm happy with this. Some people are criticizing, I'm not going to be a hypocrite because those people that you're taking care of still have enough money to live well. They're not rich, but at least they've got their board and room and they're lucky, there are not that many, there's a lot of people outside these beds that need these beds, so I'm not going to criticize that, that money used to go to their children who used to come out with their hand-out because the money wasn't spent by these people. But I expect you to do the same thing and this is what we're repeating time and time again. You know, my friend can read these things, I wish he'd read more. You know, I'm proud of myself having the guts to say that and I say it again, that's exactly the way it is. And ask any association ask anybody that knows anything about it and tell you that hospital for five acute beds doesn't make sense, and normally you wouldn't bill . . . the minimum should be around 20, 25 beds. Medically it is dynamite, because you heard the member, they're not worried about anything else, making a statement that nothing was done in a place of 500 people, you heard him . . . —(Interjection)— You're talking about those two votes, that's what he wants, that's what he wants, those two votes out there. It's exactly what he's . . .

First of all you have trouble keeping a doctor there and, you know, we can't be responsible. I can just imagine if the former government had recruited doctors and sent doctors on salary and that what would happen — Oh, you're trying to control the medical profession. The doctors don't want that and so far there hasn't been a way . . . find a way to force doctors to go somewhere. We've helped the commission, not the government, the commission has helped and it's given the authority in certain incidents too. I know I did that myself when I was chairman of the commission to recruit doctors to the different hospitals. But you have it, it's in front of you. You've had, I don't remember the name of the hospital, there's one that's at the tip of my tongue now, that they'd have a doctor for six months, he'd go away, they wouldn't have him for six months they'd have to be closed, there'd have to be somebody else come in. It didn't work, you know, there are five patients in a hospital.

This is one of the reasons why we're talking about these community clinics also, that, you know on a blank thing that's no good although my friend said I'll guarantee . . . I don't know he tells me he's not a member of government but today he made a commitment that no matter what he will have something out there. If it is it will be strictly political and partisan. How can he, I'm chastizing this government, the government that I'm aiming at, not the Minister, through the Minister because he's responsible, I'm saying you will not live with that. You will not live with what you're giving the hospital. I'm asking him where you've got this idea of 2.9 or 4.4 because I want to know. I know that no expert has ever given this and I saying that you should not freeze . . . even in all this money that we were going to spend — well I'll give you the total when we come to that — of course there were some people that wanted, but those were the priorities, what was felt were the priorities

Monday, June 5, 1978

and we said to the others there is no way that your hospital will be built within these five years. Now you can start working in a year or so. The commission is very busy with these. In a year or so if you want to start working with your group, your people around your area, and if you feel you need the hospital and you have to make an application go ahead, but it'll be built in a few years. And don't forget that that's not just a dream, two years of that was done. Go and see the hospital, the one in St. Boniface that the Grey Nuns are running. You're damn lucky to have that because the Minister had hardly been in power for a few months that he closed six nursing homes and where would he have sent these patients. It bugged up the whole program, it wasn't meant to just replace that, it was meant to gradually close some of them and get some people that are in the acute beds in the hospital out of there. That wasn't done because we needed all these places to transfer that, you end up with not more beds. And then also the people in the community who are patiently waiting who are not being admitted to acute beds to become a pressure so they can be pushed out. So these are some of the areas.

You know, you can chastize all you want, we will ask our questions and we're just as honest as any one of you and I don't doubt your honesty if you've got the guts to tell us and to keep on saying, what you have not, to try to find a scape goat and blame the NDP and blame the former Minister and blame anybody else for what you're not doing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has one minute.

MR. DESJARDINS: All right, I'll sit down because I have a list of questions that I want to ask the Minister.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

MR. BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well we've heard many speeches tonight on the various topics of Health and Social Development, but I think it is time that we take a look at our total expenditure which is \$653 million and if you divide that into a family of four it means \$653.00 for every man, woman and child in this province, and if we take a family of four this means that we're going to spend \$2,612 for each family. Now this is getting to be pretty difficult for any family to afford and we have to take a very close look at the overall expenditures in Health and Social Development. I would suggest for that reason that Minister was forced into the position where he could no longer go along with the annual 10 percent increase which was customary for the previous government, that we had to achieve some kind of accountability and this is exactly what the Minister is trying to do. This is what he is trying to achieve. We have to have some accountability within this particular department because the average family cannot afford these huge increases that we've had every year.

I think that what we're looking at over here . . . in the year 1977-78, the estimate was \$635 million . . . if we would have taken 10 percent increase on that, this would have put this year's budget up to \$698 million. What the Minister has come up with \$653 million for this year, so this is a cut of about \$45 million. Now, I don't think that this is unreasonable at all to ask our facilities in health care to come up with that type of saving. I think that we all realize that the cost of health care has gone out of hand and that we have to arrive at a program that is affordable to all people. So the Minister really had very little choice, but he had to ask for more accountability.

Now I cannot agree at all with the Minister for Inkster when he says that the increases that were needed in Health and Social Development should have come out of Highways, \$10 million I believe that he mentioned out of Highways, that they should have come out of the drainage programs, cut programs over there, because these drainage programs, they put land into production, they produce revenue so that we can pay for the type of health care facilities that we do require. So we need highways, we need highways to transport people who need hospital facilities within the limits of the city. Are you going to deny rural Manitoba access to the Health Sciences Centre because of poor roads? I don't think that that is what the previous government had intention to do at all. There is no way that we can cut back on some of these programs and yet we have to have accountability in what we do and this is really all that the Minister is asking.

I agree with the Member for St. Boniface when he says that we do need more personal care homes. I think that we all realize that on this side and we certainly hope that the freeze on that can be lifted, that the moneys will be available soon for that type of project, yet at the same time, we must take a look back at what happened to the programs that we had prior to when personal care homes were initiated.

What happened to all the private nursing homes that we had who did provide pretty good care? They've disappeared because of personal care homes and I think that we have to take a good look at the programs that we implement. How can we combine private nursing homes with personal care homes, how can we achieve the best care for these people who cannot look after

themselves and considerable amount of study is going to be forthcoming in that particular area I'm sure.

We also have to look at our whole program of senior citizens housing, how can we combine senior citizens housing with our light care program, with our medium care program in our personal care homes? How can we fit this in with our home care program? I am sure that if this type of study is going to be done, we will be able to come up with a type of a program which is going to be able to look after the people who require this type of care, and that we will be able to achieve this in the most efficient way possible. I fully realize that the Minister of Health at the present time has not had that period of time which is required to do these things and I am certain that he is going to carry on this type of study and I hope that he's going to do this in conjunction with the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation, and that both of them together can come up with the program which is going to achieve the most efficiency.

With these few comments, Mr. Chairman, I would just like the Member for St. Boniface to ponder some of these things, because if we're going to go ahead with an annual increase of 10 percent every year, and it's only going to be a matter of about 8 years or so that our \$2,612 per family is going to arrive at \$5,224 which is way beyond the means of what the average family can afford.

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

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, is there any wonder that we doubt the sincerity of some of these members. My honourable friend, just a short year ago was sitting here. What we are asking now this year is \$19 million more and he's giving us a lecture how much it's going to cost everything and he's supporting the Minister for not going ahead with this construction of personal care homes.

Last year we were asking an increase of \$35 thousand but he wasn't that concerned then about how much it would cost, he was the one that claimed . . . I've got Hansard and if he wants to read his own words on page 1263 of last year, he was saying where are those people going. You've got people that have no place to go. He was complaining about that and I was saying well there's only so much money that we have. We've come in, I announced the year before a five year program and he wasn't satisfied with that, he was in opposition and that's his role, but he was asking for more and more beds and he didn't say, well, you know, we've already got an increase of \$35 million so I guess maybe the government is doing it's share because we know that they'll have to spend money on highways and they'll have to spend money in this area. He wasn't saying that last year, he was saying we need more personal care and he read articles that the MMA had put out. The whole thing, he put it on the record and repeatedly he wanted more beds. And today well he says, well, you know, that would be good, but I understand that it's going to cost the people, and you know, he took the trouble of . . . why didn't he divide that for the same family of four last year, why didn't he do that. He - says if you're going to spend money, eventually it will be more, you could have started last year. Last year we were asking for \$35 million more. It was more, his comments would have been more valid last year than this year. Now he's talking about as if you've got again, that's another thing that gets under your skin, you've got to re-invent the wheel, you've got to start from scratch. You know, he's coming out as if something will be done with home care and in person . . . we've talked about senior citizen before and we were going in that direction. It's not something that has to be studied, the thing is how much money have you got this year to spend for these things, that's all.

Now he's saying well with these beds what about these private homes. This government, the past government brought in, the first province and the only province that went universal, brought in personal care homes and put it under hospitalization. Okay let's examine this — and we paid the cost. There was some utilization fees they pay per diem but it is subsidized, not by question of money, for everybody that is in there the government pay a certain amount of money per diem. I doubt very much, that if the Conservatives had been power this would have been done, because it wasn't done . . . and I'm not saying this sarcastically, they might have done some better things but they wouldn't have done that. It is not done in other provinces and it might be that this is a costly thing, but it was approved by all the members of this House last year, I mean everybody wanted more beds, nobody said do away, and during the campaign, the Leader of the Opposition who is now the Premier said none of these programs will be taken away from you.

It might be that this is one of the frills, it might be that the government of Manitoba shouldn't have gone into that. The other provinces aren't doing it, well then a good strong government who believes that would say okay, this is a good thing but it's too rich, we're not going to do it. Because you're not going to have people . . . as long as it is under this program, you're not going to encourage people that are going to go ahead, we're not getting any subsidy from the government. You can't do it both ways, you pay a subsidy, so change that, change that if need be, but don't blame the

former government saying well look at the debt that we have. If you want more to be paid, if that's your policy, go ahead bring in a utilization fee on this instead of that and charge more and have the guts to stand up and say okay the other provinces aren't doing it we're going to do part of it. But don't blame us. Of course, we spent money because we had those kind of program. But you can't have it both ways. First it was poor administration and fat, now that's discounted, you're not finding that, but we still spend the money and you can't say, you know, don't spend this money and everybody is going to be in trouble if you don't tighten up, all these government spending is no good, then start cutting programs, but on your own two feet for god's sake. And say that that is why the money is spent, that is why the money is spent. If you approve all our programs and say but we haven't got the money because you left us in a bad way, that's not true. We left you in a way like this because we spend money on these kind of programs — and you know it now, you haven't found that much abuse. You haven't find that much fat, you haven't found this mismanagement, and you've admitted that to your credit. You've admitted that, so now say there's only thing to do — either go ahead with the same programs and keep your mouth shut and don't blame anybody, or stop these programs and have the guts to say it and say a Conservative government doesn't believe in all this spending, doesn't believe in that and then cut these programs. Show us the programs you're going to cut. Because if you do the same thing that we do and you keep the programs, you're going to spend the same money that we do and more because it's going up.

But you're trying to be cute, you're trying to be so cute, that you're coming in with a certain amount of 2.9 for some of the things, instead of that cut programs if that's what you want.

Mr. Chairman, I wanted to answer my honourable friend because I thought that this was quite a change after last year, this member that for years yelled for more personal care homes and he wasn't worried about the money then, he didn't give a damn, but all of a sudden he's worried. Now, I have certain questions that I've asked, I've already asked the Minister about the rationale for the 2.9 and where did he get this advice, who did he talk to, I wanted a breakdown of the luxuries in hospitals and personal care home and in this field because he talked about the luxuries and frills that we've had, this is a statement that he had, I want to know the staff in, the seven major hospitals in Winnipeg and the layoffs that they have and the vacancies that they have and, Mr. Chairman, I wanted to know what monitoring mechanism has been put in place for assuring the citizens of the province that the quality of care is not being compromised and health needs of the citizens are being met. I think that's the first thing that any government should do. You know, you can cut down, but the first thing you must say well we've got to make sure that this is done.

I would want the Minister to give us the allocation of the Health Estimate amongst the health care facilities for 1978-79 and what rationale was applied in granting increase over the previous year because it is not like the public think that it is a question of 2.9 for everybody, some people are getting less, some people t. S are getting more than thao I'm asking that and a later question is in the context that some hospitals get more and some get less.

Then I would like to know the change in government funding policy is likely to encourage work being transferred from facilities to doctors private clinics and offices and what monitoring process has been established to ensure that this is the best interests of the citizens of the province. You know, that's a false economy. There are certain things that are being done by doctors in the hospital and that is reflected in the hospital budget. I want to know if some of these savings that you're going to have are going to be false savings because it's going to increase the Medicare. I also want to know, Mr. Chairman what was done in x-ray and lab units of these different hospitals that are now being done in private labs. I understand that they're quite happy with the extra work they're getting. Now when is that going to be paid for. You might be able to show a saving, but is that a true saving, Mr. Chairman.

And, what procedures have been established to determine the capital development priorities for health care institutions and to handle the emergency replacement of equipment. Now I'm told that there was certain amount. . . you can go ahead for depreciation and you can replace your equipment and so on and that's washed out, that is part of the 2.9 percent. For instance, at the Health Sciences Centre I think that is taking \$600,000 away from them. Then what is the financial operating result for each of the health care institutions for the first month of the fiscal year, that is April. That is something that I really would like to have, and what is projected for the balance of the year. The figures to indicate whether they include-exclude union settlement. Mr. Chairman, this is something that the Minister must have and I hope that we're not going to stall this for a few days until we finish that. I'm talking about the month of April and I think that will be an indication.

And what are the funding policies for the next three years for health care institutions considering the wage expectation of the Manitoba health care workers, their co-operation to date, the cost of living and the improved productivity demanded by the current years restraint programs and also the fact that AIB will disappear next year. I mean what is the planning, I'm sure that this is being looked at. This government and this Minister has made quite a point of telling us they want to examine

Monday, June 5, 1978

everything. They started with their departments, that's fair enough, the Crown corporations and then they went to the hospitals and they're examining everything and they're saying this is going to increase so much, and how are they monitoring the increase in the doctors office, because the tax money is paying for the whole cost under Medicare and now you're accepting what the medical profession are saying, this is our operating cost. You are not accepting it from the department; you are not accepting it from the Crown corporation; you are not accepting it from the hospitals; all the money paid under Medicare comes there and you are paying for the whole thing. Are you carrying the same thing in the doctor's office? Are you looking at their budget for operating costs? Are you asking them to determine if what the present staff are doing is okay? So far nothing has been done on that and you are giving them the increase; you are giving them an increase on what they were getting, so that means that over 6 percent in the doctor's office without questioning a single thing. But you are saying to the hospitals, "2.9." Why? What's the rationale for that?

Mr. Chairman, there might be other questions. I don't know how far along we will go in this. Maybe the Minister would care to comment and answer some of these questions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

The Chairman reported upon the Committee's deliberations to Mr. Speaker and requested leave to sit again.

IN SESSION

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Radisson.

MR. ABE KOVNATS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Springfield, that the report of Committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. JORGENSON: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for St. Boniface, that the House do now adjourn.

MOTION presented and carried and the House adjourned until 2:30 p.m., Tuesday afternoon.