

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, 27 June, 1980

Time — 10:00 a.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. Harry E. Graham (Birtle-Russell): Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . . Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. DONALD W. CRAIK (Riel): Mr. Speaker, I expect to be in a position later this morning to be able to circulate some information regarding the signing of Letters of Intent that is taking place in the State of Nebraska this morning between Manitoba Hydro and the Nebraska Public Power District.

MR. SPEAKER: Notices of Motion.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

MR. CRAIK introduced Bill 98, The Statute Law Amendment (Taxation) Act (1980). (Recommended by His Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor)

MR. WILSON PARASIUK (Transcona) introduced Bill 102, The Emergency Debt Moratorium Act.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: At this time, I should like to introduce to the honourable members 18 visitors from Grades 7 to 9 standing from the Dunrea School, under the direction of Mr. G. Bray. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. HOWARD PAWLEY (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, to the Attorney-General. Can the Attorney-General advise this morning if a date has been set for the Robbins inquest, the case involving the patient at the Selkirk Mental Hospital, that drowned in a bathtub June 12th?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. GERALD W. J. MERCIER (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, I can't advise as to the date but I can advise the Leader of the Opposition that an inquest will be held and a date will be set in due course.

In addition, in response to a question from the Member for St. Johns I think, as already been

reported in the newspaper, an inquest will be held into the death of the young boy who drowned out of St. Amant Centre.

MR. PAWLEY: Further to the Attorney-General. Can the Attorney-General advise whether or not the Henlay inquest will be completed shortly? What is the status of the Henlay inquest, the Brandon case, involving the patient at the Brandon Hospital?

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I'll inquire into the status of that matter and advise the Leader of the Opposition later.

MR. PAWLEY: Further, by way of question to the Minister of Consumer Affairs. In view of information that a 100-unit apartment, on 2080 Pembina Highway is seeing its rents increased by some 27.5 percent, for two bedroom suites, can the Minister advise whether or not he will be introducing legislation giving tenants the right to challenge such increases and to have an independent decision on the fairness of such rent increases?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

HON. WARNER H. JORGENSEN (Morris): Perhaps my honourable friend hasn't been here for a few days, Mr. Speaker. Such a bill has already been introduced, in the form of amendments to The Landlord and Tenant Act.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the legislation the Minister refers to gives the tenants the right to appeal only in the event of referral by the Minister, is the Minister indicating that in a case such as this that he is prepared now to refer, under this legislation, these kinds of increases to the arbiter.

MR. JORGENSEN: We're prepared to look at any situation that is drawn to our attention that deems to require some consideration.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, further to the Minister. In view of the fact that leases signed now, in view of the increase referred to, in the apartment block on Pembina Highway, are binding, can the Minister advise what he is prepared to do now, in view of the fact that we're dealing with signed leases, binding leases at this time, regardless of whether or not his legislation, which we dispute, will provide any remedial benefit for the tenants involved in the Pembina Highway apartment block?

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, until the bill is passed, the provisions of The Rent Stabilization Act are still in effect. The bill that is before the House now, provides the repeal of The Rent Stabilization Act but that does not take place until the bill is passed.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. If I may have leave of the House, it has been brought to my attention that on the Introduction of Bill No. 102, that I read into the record that it was seconded by the

Honourable Member for Kildonan. It has been brought to my attention that the Honourable Member for Kildonan was not in the House at that time.

The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: Yes, while I was reading that the member walked out. I could have corrected it but he was right here when I was reading it. By the time you read it he had left the Chamber but I can make the motion again, if you wish.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

MR. PETER FOX: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I apologize to the House. I was not aware the honourable member was going to use me as a seconder but I am prepared to second his bill at any time.

MR. SPEAKER: I hope that clears up some of the problems. We'll now proceed with questions.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. SIDNEY GREEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address a question to the Minister of Natural Resources. Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that Canada's and Manitoba's so effective protection other than the good will, which I don't deny of people within the United States, rests with the International Joint Commission vis-a-vis the Garrison Diversion, does the Minister not think that it would be best now for him and Ottawa to cease the extra-curricular activities and place our reliance on that international body and make any representations which we wish to make to that international body, which has served both countries well and should serve both countries well in the future?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. BRIAN RANSOM (Souris-Killamey): Mr. Speaker, I was in Ottawa on Wednesday of this week and was consulting with staff of the Department of External Affairs to try and determine what the best strategy would be and in fact to determine, just to reassure myself, that the position of the federal government had not changed; that there was some indication on the basis of Mr. Axworthy's statements that perhaps the federal government was calling for some study outside of the purview of the International Joint Commission. So part of my purpose in being in Ottawa on Wednesday morning was to satisfy myself and the government that in fact the position had not changed and that External Affairs continue to speak for the government of Canada.

I certainly agree with the position that External Affairs has taken, that we do not need any further studies; in fact, any suggestion of a requirement for further studies only weakens the case that we have. We are certainly prepared to continue to recall the recommendations of the Department of External Affairs and to hold to the same position that we have since the International Joint Commission reported.

I think that the activities that have taken place have made Canada's and Manitoba's concerns, brought them forcefully to the attention of the Senate and Congress in the United States but we continue to deal through the channels as approved by the Department of External Affairs.

MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Honourable Minister for his answer but I wish he would be more specific. Does he not feel and does he not think that he should make representations to Ottawa to the effect that any attempt by us to be involved in internal politics and the United States would be counterproductive and that our position should be to the international body, not to legislative bodies in the United States? Has that not been the way in which we have achieved considerable in the past and should not that be the way in which we should proceed at the present time?

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, I believe that is the course of action that our government has, in fact, been following. We have not taken any action that has not been action recommended and approved by the Department of External Affairs. We are in constant touch on an almost hourly basis with representatives of the Department of External Affairs and we have been co-ordinating our efforts through them because we do not wish to weaken our position in any way by departing from a course of action that they would recommend. Certainly we support, and the Department of External Affairs supports, the position of the International Joint Commission. They have recommended that we make some of these direct contacts that we have made because they feel it would be valuable to bring our position to the attention of Senators and Congressmen, but I believe the action that was taken by the federal government yesterday, in rejecting the idea of a joint representation to go to Ottawa, was an indication of the position of External Affairs, a position which I support.

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

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the Minister of Immigration is involved in this, when he was in this House, was totally opposed to what Manitoba and External Affairs had decided upon, and since he is now in a position of authority, and since he recommended the assinine procedure of suing in the United States courts, subjecting ourselves to a decision of those courts, does the Minister not think it advisable to communicate to Ottawa the dangerous presence of that Minister in their fold with respect to the Garrison Diversion position?

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, that is precisely why I was in Ottawa on Wednesday morning, to assure that the Department of External Affairs continued to speak for Canada on matters such as this, and that the position taken by the Government of Canada had not changed.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MRS. JUNE WESTBURY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I want to revert back to the questions asked by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. My understanding is that the Honourable Minister for Consumer Affairs indicated that until the new Bill 83 comes into force, receives Royal Assent, that the former bill will remain in place. I wonder how he reconciles that statement with Section 39 of the new bill, which says, "This Act comes into force on July 1st, 1980". This is a question . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. I believe the honourable member should probably raise these questions when the bill is before the House.

The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MRS. WESTBURY: Mr. Speaker, will the Minister confirm that the new bill will be retroactive to July 1st, so I wonder how that reconciles with the statement he made to the House?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, I think the proper place for these questions to be asked is during the committee stage of the bill or during the course of second reading, which will begin very shortly.

MRS. WESTBURY: Mr. Speaker, will the Minister then indicate to the people of Manitoba, to the tenants of Manitoba, what steps they should take to protect themselves in the interim since their leases are now coming due. Of course, everybody knows that many leases are being signed at the end of June to take effect at the end of September. This is part of the legislation, Mr. Speaker. Would the Minister then give advice to the tenants as to how they can protect themselves and how they should proceed, in view of his statement to the House and in view of the wording of the bill?

MR. JORGENSEN: My suggestion is that the tenants who feel they may have a problem still have access to the Rentalsman's Office and I would suggest that perhaps that may be the best place to contact.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for the Rent Stabilization Board and it follows directly on previous questions. I would ask the Minister to investigate a case of a Mr. Hugh Stewart from Transcona whose rent has increased effective September 1, before the end of this year and the end of the effective date for the existing rent control guidelines. The proposed increases by his landlord are higher than the existing guidelines in effect until October 1. He has phoned the Rent Stabilization Board and the Rent Stabilization Board has not dealt with the case in that they assume that somehow this legislation is dealing with it. Here is a specific case of a man caught right in the middle. Can the Minister please investigate this case and indicate why the Rent Stabilization Board will not act to enforce guidelines

announced a year ago which were supposed to be effective until October 1, 1980?

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, I'll be happy to look into that particular case, if my honourable friend could give me the name and the address of that particular person.

MR. PARASIUK: I'd like to ask the Minister a supplementary question. In previous years the Minister indicated specific guidelines for rent increases and if tenants felt that their rent increases were higher than those guidelines, they could appeal to the Rent Stabilization Board. There is some dispute as to who tenants should appeal to, but right now there are no guidelines whatsoever regarding appeal. Should tenants appeal 15 percent increases, 20 percent increases, 25 percent increases, 35 percent increases or 45 percent rent increases, which have indeed taken place? What is the guideline that this government has as to allowable rent increases for tenants in Manitoba?

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, that will depend on the tenant himself. If the tenant feels as though he has a cause for complaint, he can appeal to the Rentalsman's Office.

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

MR. PARASIUK: I would like to ask the Minister if he would establish guidelines as to what constitutes allowable rent increases; otherwise we can get people appealing 3 percent increases and 45 percent increases which will completely flood the Rentalsman, which doesn't have the staff to deal with this matter and completely constipate a system which is already very badly constipated by inaction by this Minister.

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

MR. SAUL CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Honourable Minister of Consumer Affairs whether he is indicating to us that there is presently a law in force which will limit increases in rent imposed by landlords, and if so, just what is the law in relation to that in his department?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

MR. JORGENSEN: The current provisions exist, Mr. Speaker, and until the legislation that is currently before the House is passed, the Rent Stabilization Board continues to be in existence.

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

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, inasmuch as I believe that the current legislation, without any announcement by the Minister as to an acceptable percentage increase, does not in any way impose any restraint on landlords, just how will the rentalsman have any authority to review and reduce, in a mandatory way, excessive rents imposed under the present legislation?

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, I'll have to investigate that particular matter and I'll report back to the House.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Honourable Minister's undertaking and hope it will be soon enough so that people will have some guidance at this crucial time of the month and of the year.

May I ask the Minister also to confirm my impression, and it's his legislation, that the only way, under the new legislation, that there can be any complain arbitratable or reviewable on excessive rents, is if the Minister himself so directs, and no other way.

MR. JORGENSEN: It is our intention to carry on a complete monitoring process and wherever we feel that there are rent increases, beyond what could be considered a reasonable level in that particular area, and for similar type of accommodation, then we certainly will be taking action.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Johns with a fourth question.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, just to confirm with the Honourable Minister, that he alone will be the one to decide whether or not to have the matter reviewed, will he undertake that, somehow, people who sign leases under duress or protest, but sign them now, will still be protected under his legislation and with the right to go to court and not to plead at the doorstep of the Minister?

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, provision is made that landlords or tenants will have access to the Rentalsman's Office, to the Director of Arbitration and finally the courts if they choose.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Wellington.

MR. CORRIN: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for the Rent Stabilization Program. In view of the questions asked by my honourable friend from Brandon East yesterday, Mr. Speaker, with respect to reports pertaining to the current rental situation in the city of Winnipeg and the advice of the Minister in this regard, I was wondering whether the Minister would be willing to table the monitoring reports prepared by his departmental staff, which sustain that the government's decision to enter into the final decontrol stages of the Rent Stabilization Program.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, the monitoring that was taking place was not carried on with a view to using that information as a determination as to whether or not the final phases of the program were going to be entered into. It was a monitoring program that was intended to give us information as to what was actually happening in those areas where rents had been removed from controls. I have no objections to having that information provided to the House.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Seven Oaks.

MR. SAUL A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, further to the Minister of Consumer Affairs, I'm concerned and I wonder if the Minister could explain this to me. If a person who is required today or July 1st to sign a lease, has been living in an apartment for a number of years and is now required to sign a lease at a figure which that person cannot afford, knowing that there may be a possibility of arbitration later on, but if that arbitration a month from now fails, is that person then bound by the signing of that lease even though he cannot pay that rent? He can move out but is still bound legally if the landlord persists on demanding that that lease be honoured.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. While I realize the subject matter is very important to everybody in the province of Manitoba, asking for a legal opinion is somewhat outside the bounds of our question period. Does the honourable member care to rephrase his question?

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I am not asking for a legal opinion. The government has a responsibility. The Minister has just indicated that the present Act is still in force but there's no allowable limit, therefore 100 percent is now legal under the Act. Mr. Speaker, I am therefore asking, a person who is now confronted with an increase of 50 percent — and this is a case — has until July 1st to sign that lease. If they don't sign the lease they must move. If they sign the lease they will be bound by that lease. If they cannot, after all proceedings, afford to pay that 50 percent increase, what is their position? Can they break the lease and move elsewhere or are they stuck and bound by that lease and therefore have no redress at all?

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier, that particular question is the one that was raised by the Member for Transcona and I have indicated that I'd be looking into that particular situation and providing an answer at the earliest opportunity.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, the Member for Transcona indicated that the case he was dealing with was really not for October 1st and not a 90 day notice but a 60 day notice, September 1st. I'm talking about the normal kind of situation and I still want to know, should those people sign a lease? If they don't sign the lease because they're fearful of committing themselves to paying a rent which they cannot afford, should they sign a lease? If they do, are they bound by it? If they don't, can they be evicted or given notice by their landlord?

MR. JORGENSEN: As I have already indicated, Mr. Speaker, I will try and provide an answer for my honourable friend as soon as possible.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Honourable, the Minister of Finance. Would it be correct, Mr. Speaker, that with the supplementary estimates tabled yesterday that the budgeted deficit in the province of Manitoba will now

exceed 180 million, the highest actual deficit in the history of the province of Manitoba?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, the member added the modifier, the highest 'actual' deficit. The actual deficit will be the deficit that's posted at the end of the year. We'll be able to answer that question about 12 months from now.

The budgeted deficit, as indicated yesterday, the full amount of the drought program, some 41 million, is required to be budgeted in total as we indicated in the statement that was presented to the House by the First Minister earlier this week; that the recoveries even on the rail transportation, we are advised that we should cover it entirely in the budget. We expect to cover some 25 million with a net of about 14 million to 15 million out of that total of 41 million. So, Mr. Speaker, what the actual turns out one year from now I wouldn't want to speculate on.

MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. If the Honourable Minister's budgeting is accurate and if the recoveries do not come within the fiscal year, 1980 to 1981, but are due to the province and the Minister has budgeted accurately, will we then be faced with the highest actual deficit ever experienced by the province of Manitoba?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, unless there is an impact on the revenues which are awkward and difficult and would not be appropriate to speculate on at this time, unless there is a significant impact on the revenue side, I would think that we would not expect the deficit actual for the year to reach the 191 million figure that was posted for '77, '78.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, would the Minister not agree that on the basis of the estimates delivered to the House plus the supplementary estimates, that we are now faced with a budgeted deficit — given the fact that recoveries will not be made until a year later — with a budgeted deficit of over 180 million? —(Interjection)—

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, answering the statement that's coming from a seat, no government has fought a drought of the size and magnitude of the drought we're facing in Manitoba at the present time.

Mr. Speaker, we have no qualms about moving in —(Interjections)— Mr. Speaker, I hear a further comment . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I hear a further comment that the drought is an excuse. That's one of the intolerable comments that I've heard in this regard. It shows the capacity of this Opposition to understand what is really happening in this province.

Mr. Speaker, let me get back to the question on the actual deficit. The lapsing that the government had last year mounted, as will be seen when the preliminary report is posted in the next few days. The lapsing for last year was some 33 million. Under the

former government's procedures, the lapsing and the Capital Carry Forward Program more or less offset one another. Now with no Capital Carry Forward into another year, our budgeting program is more accurate than it was under the former administration. In fact, when we state a budget now there is much greater chance, because of the management procedures as well as the fact that capital is not carried forward, that we're more likely to come under that than over it.

As a result, Mr. Speaker, the member may recall the debates that took place when we made those changes; I would expect again that the actual deficit, barring unforeseen problems yet, Mr. Speaker, that at the present time unless there is some undue impact on the revenue side that cannot be predicted at this time, that I expect the deficit as of now, still to be a year from now, under what it was in '77-'78.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to the Minister responsible for the Rent Stabilization Board. Some year-and-a-half ago Edison Realty challenged a ruling of the Rent Stabilization Board, took the matter to court and had the rent rebates —(Interjection)— I'm asking the question, Mr. Speaker, the backbenchers there aren't interested in this particular issue because they're embarrassed by their incompetence on it. I'd like to ask the Minister if he will pursue, in court, Edison Realty which has held up in court for one-and-a-half years rent rebates owing to a huge number of tenants on Henderson Highway, rent rebates which after a year-and-a-half would total into the hundreds of thousands of dollars.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Minister.

MR. JORGENSEN: Yes, I feel I should answer that particular question. The hearing has been held and has been concluded. We are now waiting the decision of the court. As soon as that decision of the court is handed down then we will be able to settle the matter.

MR. PARASIUK: Yes, I have a question to the Minister of Finance. Could he indicate why in the supplementary estimates he indicated no provisions for the payment of civil servants after their settlement. I was told in committee that would amount to something in the order of 2.5 to 5 million of new moneys. He has included in the supplementary estimates some estimate of 485,000 for Natural Resources. Can he tell us why he has not included in the supplementary estimates another 2.5 to 5 million for the civil service settlement?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, as the practice has been on over-runs of that sort, you usually plan on contingency amounts that will come out of the lapsing that occurs to offset and, as a result, there

has been no requirement to take it into consideration at this point in time.

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

MR. PARASIUK: I'd like to ask the Minister if he will be bringing in additional supplementary estimates to cover the 925,000 deficit of the Health Sciences Centre for last year, which was a fourteen-fold increase over the deficit of the previous year and, given the fact that the settlements have just been concluded for this year, which could lead to a very large increase in the deficit for 1980-81 for various hospitals in Manitoba. Is the Minister going to bring in additional supplementary estimates to cover the additional costs for hospitals to ensure that they have adequate services provided to the people of Manitoba and how much will that contribute to the deficit of this government?

MR. CRAIK: If that action is required, Mr. Speaker, it would fall under the same category as the previous question with regard to the increase in the MGEA settlement.

Mr. Speaker, might I indicate to the House that we've just received word that the contract dispute between the city of Winnipeg and the Canadian Union of Public Employees has been resolved and that there will no strike in the city services or municipal hospitalities.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Finance. In view of the Minister of Finance's statements pertaining to the deficit in 1977, in supplementary estimates being brought in 1977 to deal with a then downturn in the economy, can the Minister advise whether or not he intends to introduce supplementary estimates yet this session to deal with the economic drought in Manitoba, the unemployment situation, the exodus of Manitobans to the west and to the east; is he prepared to bring in supplementary estimates this session?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, the biggest drought around here is the Leader of the Opposition and his policies.

MR. PAWLEY: We're not surprised because when the Minister of Finance and the First Minister and others have drought in their thinking and are unable to provide any answers, they always resort to personal attacks.

To the Minister of Consumer Affairs: In view of the concern expressed and the need for policy to be announced prior to the July 1st signing of leases, including the apartment to which reference was made to on 2080 Pembina Highway, would the Minister introduce second reading and make a statement re policy by consent of the House this morning, so that tenants know in advance of the July 1st date as to where they stand?

MR. JORGENSON: As my honourable friend may be aware, if he looks at the Order Paper, he will find that particular bill is slated for second reading this morning.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. KEN MacMASTER (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, the Member for Churchill asked a question approximately a week ago about the deteriorating air service by PWA, at least I believe the first portion of the question was PWA in the north, and I've determined what the flight schedules are and I'm not sure if that totally answers his question. The flights to the various constituencies, to the Thompson one, there were 12 in the spring and the new summer schedule has 12; to the Churchill one, which the member will be interested in, there were six scheduled flights in the spring and that is reduced to five for summer; to The Pas constituency, there were 10 scheduled flights in the spring and in the summer there will be 10; to the constituency of Flin Flon and the town of Flin Flon, there were eight scheduled flights in the spring and that's been increased to 11 for the summer; to the constituency of Churchill, the town of Lynn Lake, there were two scheduled flights in the spring and the summer schedule has four.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Wellington.

MR. CORRIN: My question, Mr. Speaker, is for the Minister of Consumer Affairs responsible for the Rent Stabilization Act. I would ask the Minister whether or not he has perused the contents of The Social Planning Council Report dealing with housing needs in the province of Manitoba, the one that states that it is necessary, in order to stabilize the housing market in Manitoba, that there be a combination of rent subsidy controls on rents, particularly in the high-demand, low-supply, low-income area as well as public housing. Has he read that report and does he concur with it?

MR. JORGENSON: Mr. Speaker, No, I have not read that report.

MR. CORRIN: On the premise that the report may be accurate, Mr. Speaker, I would ask the honourable member if he could advise us what the government intends to do to prevent unscrupulous landlords from increasing rents at the general expense of all the taxpayers of Manitoba? Mr. Speaker, these would be with respect to the units subsidized by the shelter allowances introduced by his government. What is the government's intention in this regard, Mr. Speaker?

MR. JORGENSON: Mr. Speaker, the proposals that are contained in the bill before the House at the present time is intended to deal with that particular situation. Now, if my honourable friend feels as though the bill does not deal with those things, then I'll be happy to hear his suggestions as to how it can be improved and, of course, that's the purpose of second reading. I'm looking forward to hearing what

my honourable friends have to say on this particular matter.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. LEONARD S. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask a supplementary question to the Minister of Consumer Affairs, in charge of rent decontrol in Manitoba and ask him, inasmuch as this bill now repeals various political and religious rights and also takes away other rights from tenants, which such tenants may not be aware of, and inasmuch as the legislation will be retroactive July 1, if not passed in this House before that time, would the Minister be prepared to postpone the enactment of that particular legislation to give all groups an opportunity to come to the House and make known their views with respect to certain rights that are being taken away from them?

MR. JORGENSON: Mr. Speaker, I don't believe that there any rights being taken away from anybody because they are more than amply covered under the provisions of The Human Rights Act and it is because they are covered adequately by The Human Rights Act that they are being removed in this particular incidence because there is a conflict and a great deal of overlapping.

MR. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister, there are specific rights such as Section 25 of the bill which repeals Section 114 which provides protection against certain kinds . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. Order please. May I suggest the honourable member debate the bill when it appears before the House.
The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, you will be assured that this side will be debating this bill in great detail, but the point I am making, Mr. Speaker, and therefore my question —(Interjection)—

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. Order please. The purpose of the question period is not to make points but to try and elicit information.
The Honourable Member for Brandon East with a question.

MR. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, the point which I'm trying to get clarified by a question to the Minister, my question . . . —(Interjection)—

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. Order please. The honourable member may ask his question.
The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. EVANS: My question, Mr. Speaker, is to get a point of clarification from the Minister with regard to certain fundamental rights that are being taken away from the tenants, so I'm asking the Honourable Minister if he would now consider postponing the enactment of this particular piece of legislation which does take rights away from tenants, to some reasonable time whereby the people of Manitoba thereby affected have an opportunity to make their

beliefs known to the Minister and to the members of this Legislature.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

MR. JORGENSON: Mr. Speaker, perhaps it escaped my honourable friend, but the usual practice in this Chamber is, after a bill passes second reading and they will have ample opportunity to express their views on the bill on that later occasion, the public will have an opportunity to make their representation at Law Amendments Committee. That's a practice that's always been followed.

In the meantime, Mr. Speaker, I don't feel as though there are any infringements or deterioration of rights because those rights are contained in The Human Rights Act in the province of Manitoba. Those that were placed in here are, in a large sense, a duplication of those that are contained in The Human Rights Act and it seems unnecessary to have those rights spelled out in two separate pieces of legislation.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The time for question period having expired, proceed with Orders of the Day.
The Honourable Member for Gladstone.

COMMITTEE CHANGE

MR. JAMES R. FERGUSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to move a change on the Industrial Relations Committee and substitute the name of Mr. Driedger for Mr. Sherman.

MR. SPEAKER: Are those changes agreeable? (Agreed)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, perhaps if I could first of all indicate that, as discussed with the Opposition House Leader, two committees will meet this afternoon at 1:30 p.m. The Agricultural Committee will meet to deal with Bill No. 16 and the Industrial Relations Committee will meet to deal with Bill No. 8 and perhaps another bill, if it is dealt with this morning; that would be Bill No. 73.

It is then, by unanimous agreement, Mr. Speaker, the intention to meet tomorrow morning, Saturday morning, from 10:00 to 12:30 and then to adjourn until Wednesday.

I would also indicate that I would call the Law Amendments Committee for Wednesday morning at 10:00 o'clock, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, would you call second reading of Bill No. 83?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I'm sorry, did the Honourable Minister pass the Speed-Up motion? Is

he intending to deal with that today? Oh, you're dealing with this by consent? Okay.

MR. SPEAKER: Second reading, Bill No. 83. The Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

SECOND READING — GOVERNMENT BILLS

BILL NO. 83 — AN ACT TO AMEND THE LANDLORD AND TENANT ACT AND THE CONDOMINIUM ACT

MR. JORGENSEN presented Bill No. 83, An Act to amend The Landlord and Tenant Act and The Condominium Act, for second reading.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, after that question period, I wondered if there was any necessity of me speaking to the provisions of this bill in second reading, since it was pretty thoroughly discussed.

Mr. Speaker, when The Rent Stabilization Act was introduced in 1976, it was clearly indicated at the time that it was the intention of the government to pass the bill as complementary legislation to the wage and price controls legislation that had been introduced in Ottawa and it was also indicated fairly clearly by both the Minister who introduced the legislation and later, the Premier, that it was the intention of the government to remove the legislation when wage and price controls in Ottawa had been removed. Clearly, it was the intention of the government to bring in rent stabilization legislation as a complementary and provincial part of the anti-inflation program that was being carried on at that time.

In April of 1978 the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs at that time, my colleague, the Member for Brandon West, introduced a program which was intended, rather than to remove rent controls in one stage, to introduce legislation that would remove rent controls in stages. The final stage of that program now is taking place at the end of this month.

You might say that the province of Manitoba has about 120,000 rental units. Of those, about 90,000 are in the city of Winnipeg and approximately 7,000 in the city of Brandon. Of that amount, approximately 10 percent of those rental units have now been removed from controls through the stages that have been announced in April of 1978. That would amount to about 10 percent of the total number of rental units that are free of controls at this present time.

This particular bill contains several amendments that may be considered significant, as well as some more mundane housekeeping amendments. The first one, Mr. Speaker, the landlords have been protesting the costs and time involved in obtaining an order for possession through the courts. In some jurisdictions, it has been, or is proposed, that all landlords and

tenant matters be removed from the courts and placed in the hands of the Rentalsman or Tenancy Commission. These perversions are of doubtful constitutional validity and the matter is now being tested in the Supreme Court of Canada as a result of Ontario's effort to introduce such a system. So we have provided, as an alternative to this rather sweeping type of change, we have proposed that landlord and tenant disputes of all kinds shall be mediated by the Rentalsman.

In the event that mediation fails, the dispute will be referred to a Director of Arbitrations. Either party will have an opportunity to object to arbitration proceedings, in which case the matter will have to be dealt with through the courts. If neither party objects, the arbitration will proceed and the decision will be final and binding. A list of arbitrators will be named in order that this service may be available throughout the province. It is proposed that the Rent Stabilization Act be repealed. The Director of Arbitrations will be directed to monitor rents for specific types of accommodations, rents in a specific area, or rents charged by a specific landlord or classes of landlords. Where rents are found to be excessive, as defined in the Act, and the alternative of similar accommodations are not available to tenants in the same general area, the Minister will instruct the Director of Arbitrations to refer the matter to a panel of not less than three arbitrators whose decision, in respect of the rents allowed to be charged, will be final and binding.

It is estimated that there is approximately six-months work remaining to clean up issues remaining in The Rent Stabilization Act. It is suggested also that tenants should be granted an additional six-month period in which to lodge complaints about their landlords having demanded and received higher than allowable rent increases. The clean-up will be effected through the offices of the Director of Arbitrations. In the past, there have been problems arise where mobile home park owners discontinue operation of the park in order that the property may be put to alternate use. It is proposed that, under these circumstances, the tenant be given six months notice of termination.

The bill also incorporates lesser but, nonetheless, significant proposals. A landlord is currently forbidden from demanding post-dated cheques for rent from a tenant. It is proposed that this be amended to permit a landlord to require one post-dated cheque at a time. This will enable the landlord to be more quickly aware of the tenant's capability to meet his rent obligation. The time lag in obtaining this knowledge will be reduced and the landlord can quickly take appropriate action to curtail potential losses. The rentalsman would be empowered to levy an administration fee if he is required to redirect rents or accept rents on behalf of the landlord. At the present time, in many instances, where landlords have simply left the premises, it is necessary for us to administer those processes on behalf of the owners. The proposal here is to be able to levy an administration fee on behalf of the owner.

At the present time there is a dispute about a security deposit. The entire deposit, with interest, must be paid to the rentalsman. This will be modified to require only that portion of the deposit that is in dispute to be paid to the rentalsman. Occasionally,

we find the landlord is found to have taken more than one-half month's rent as the security deposit. While he is subject to prosecution, the rentalsman currently has no authority to order repayment of the security deposit excess to the tenant. It is proposed to give the rentalsman such authority. The landlord charge for a sublet agreement will be increased from 10 to 20.00. We felt that in the light of the present costs that was not an unreasonable request.

In reference to the particular matter that was raised by the Member for Brandon East, I want to repeat that the prohibition on discrimination is removed as this is now adequately covered in the Human Rights Act and the current duplication has created problems from time to time. The rate of interest payable on security deposit will be determined by regulation. As you know, there have been quite a number of requests for us to raise the interest on the security deposit. We felt that rather than placing it as a provision in the Act it would be more appropriate to deal with it by regulation and such a provision is being made.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the bill incorporates amendments to The Condominium Act, particularly as it relates to conversion of existing buildings. There have been increased activity in conversions and this has created considerable apprehension, indeed, opposition from some tenants. In the existing Condominium Act a tenant in occupancy is entitled to a 30-day option to purchase his unit. It is proposed that, if a tenant does not exercise his option, his tenancy cannot be terminated in less than two months after the expiry of the option. This effectively gives the tenant two months and 30 days notice. If the tenant decides to leave, he may do so at any time and the landlord shall pay his moving expenses up to an amount equal to one month's rent. This, Mr. Speaker, is a brief outline of the basic issues dealt with in this bill and I believe they all have reasonable and commendable purpose. I would hope that during the course of this debate, if my honourable friends have further suggestions to make that can be considered reasonable and appropriate, I am perfectly willing to listen to any of their suggestions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I just want to ask the Minister a question, if I may. There was some noise when he was talking about the specific as to excessive rents and I want to make sure that I heard correctly, that the only way that a tenant can have the excessive rents adjudicated on would be by reference by the Minister to a Board of Arbitration and that there are no other legal recourses given to the tenant on excess rents.

MR. JORGENSON: Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated, the intention of this bill is to remove the province from rent controls. In doing that, of course, it is hardly appropriate to just simply suggest an alternative form of rent controls. What we do propose to do is to ensure that in cases, where excessive rents do prevail, that we do have an opportunity to look at that particular situation and we will indeed be monitoring, throughout the

province, in order to give us some idea of what rent increases, either in particular apartment blocks owned by particular people, in particular areas, or in particular classes of apartments. We want to be able to determine to the best extent possible where we feel there may be difficulties arising. Of course, I'm quite sure that the tenants themselves will be keeping our office well advised as to the state of rent increases in particular areas, and that, I am sure, will be very helpful to the department in attempting to determine where we consider that problem areas may arise. It will be our intention to then move in those particular areas and deal with that situation as we see fit.

MR. CHERNIACK: Another question, Mr. Speaker. In specific, to the question asked by the Member for Seven Oaks, a tenant who does not know whether or not the excessive rents will be reduced and who now signs a lease because he is compelled to sign it, in order to remain on the premises, will he be bound to honour that lease even when it is found that the rent is not excessive and, nevertheless, he himself could not afford to pay the rent? Will there be, or is there a provision in this bill, or will the Minister consider a provision that under those circumstances will enable the tenant to terminate the lease in order to be able to search for more reasonable accommodation within his needs?

MR. JORGENSON: Yes, Mr. Speaker, and I can't answer the specific question as to whether or not that is contained specifically in the provisions of the bill. If it is not explicit then I hope it is implicit but I will certainly want to take my friend's suggestion into consideration because I think it is one that's worthy of consideration.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Wellington.

MR. CORRIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, it is our intention to make our position known with respect to this bill this morning, Mr. Speaker. We have found reason, Mr. Speaker, to find grave cause for concern with the provisions of the bill before the Assembly. We feel that it is a seriously flawed piece of legislation, one which does not recommend itself either to common sense or social equity. Mr. Speaker, we can say that this is probably the most savage piece of landlord and tenant legislation that has come before any Legislature or parliament since the notorious Acts of William and Mary in the 17th century and, Mr. Speaker, we want that to be a matter of record before this Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, we intend, in responding to the explanatory statement of the Minister, to deal clause by clause with the provisions, relating what we regard to be the shortcomings and potential pitfalls of this piece of legislation. It is clearly, Mr. Speaker, and I think, unequivocally a piece of legislation that is biased toward the landlord and rather unconcerned of the rights of the tenant and, Mr. Speaker, the provisions of the bill are clear. To make sure that the terms of reference are understood by all, Mr. Speaker, we can indicate that we find exception to several areas of this bill. The bill deals basically with changes with respect to The Landlord

and Tenant Act, with respect to tenants rights. There's a second section that, of course, extinguishes any semblance of rent control legislation in the province of Manitoba; and thirdly, there are amendments to The Condominium Act which will greatly disadvantage tenants whose landlords wish to convert premises to a condominium status. It is my understanding, Mr. Speaker, in the latter regard, that the Member for Fort Rouge, who currently has a private member's bill before the Legislature, will be debating at some length the relative and comparative advantages and disadvantages between her bill and the one before us this morning.

Dealing first with the general change of status with respect to tenants' rights, Mr. Speaker, I wish to address you to Section 24 of the bill, which is a provision which will affect all families, all tenants, families with school children. Formerly, Mr. Speaker, under the legislation proclaimed during the term of office of the former New Democrat Government, there was provision protecting tenants from eviction when they had children of school age, who were in the course of studies during the year. There was, of course, a general exclusion with respect to tenants who had created a nuisance or were in arrears of rent, so there was some proviso for landlords to extinguish tenancy rights, if either of those two conditions precedent existed. Now, Mr. Speaker, if your landlord wants to convert your particular suite into a condominium, or if you are renting a mobile home site and the landlord wants to convert that site into something other than a mobile home site, he or she will simply have to give notice and out you go. So there has been a major shift in emphasis away from tenants' rights toward very restrictive powers to the landlord. We regard the former law as being extremely important, Mr. Speaker, because we recognize that the rights of families should always come before the right of a property owner to exercise certain prerogatives with respect to his premises. Now, Mr. Speaker, we have the recognition of the property owner's supreme right to use his property as he sees fit, under any circumstances. This, Mr. Speaker, is a very regressive move, one calculated, I think, to advance only the most dogmatic indoctrinaire of the Conservative philosophy. It's not, and no pun is intended, it is not a progressive Conservative measure. It is true, as I said earlier, a regressive Conservative measure.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, and I deal with this point specifically because the Minister, I think, presumably unwittingly mislead the House in his response to the Member for Brandon East, during question period, with respect to the question of the repeal of political rights under The Landlord and Tenant Act. As you will recall, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Brandon East asked the speaker whether the rights accorded tenants under the present legislation would have any substantive effect, or if the repeal of those rights would have any substantive effect and he replied, that it was thought by the government that The Human Rights Legislation in this province was sufficient and that it protected them. Well, Mr. Speaker, it may be true that The Human Rights Act will protect people with respect to the traditional grounds, that is to say, protection against discrimination on the basis of race, or colour, or

creed but, Mr. Speaker, in studying the provisions of this bill, we must tell the Minister that we see no provision that will protect a tenant from discrimination on the basis of membership in a tenants association, nowhere in this legislation, Mr. Speaker, do we find such protective provision and this is disconcerting to say the very least, Mr. Speaker.

This is not, Mr. Speaker, a provision of The Human Rights Act, and it's our contention that this provision, if implemented, will simply allow the Manitoba Landlords and Tenants Association to implement their notorious black list. We all know, Mr. Speaker, because it has been publicized on several occasions that the Landlords Association has effectively published a list of the names of all tenants who have been activistly oriented with respect to tenants' rights and there have been complaints, I believe, Mr. Speaker, to the Human Rights Commission in this regard, and now, Mr. Speaker, what do we have but the Minister responsible for The Landlord and Tenant Act, actually providing the enabling legislation which will enable them to act discriminatorially against these tenants.

So it's our position, Mr. Speaker, that in the absence of any infringement of tenants' rights, that these people will most certainly be at considerable jeopardy. Mr. Speaker, I can only say in passing with respect to this provision, that it seems most certainly consistent with the Premier's position that human rights should not entrenched in any sort of formal way, and it certainly indicates, Mr. Speaker, that the people of this province can't trust the legislators currently responsible for governmental affairs to protect their rights by way of legislation. If that were so, Mr. Speaker, and the government was acting in good faith in this regard most certainly, Mr. Speaker, we would have before us legislation which made provision for the protection of tenants rights. But unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, and I might say in complete consistence with the past record of this government, we have no provision whatsoever to effect that safeguard.

Thirdly, Mr. Speaker, we are very concerned with the apparent termination of the one rent increase a year rule. Formerly, Mr. Speaker, as I'm sure all members will recollect, there was provision in The Landlord and Tenant Act that prevented any rental unit from becoming the subject of more than one rental increase in any one year. Now, Mr. Speaker, this is very important because this was essentially an anti-inflationary measure adopted by the former government to assure that people, particularly in the inner city area where the turnover in apartments is very high, would not be exploited by landlords who — and I think it's a matter of record, Mr. Speaker, in that particular area, the core area — were not exploited by landlords who wished to, if you will, gouge rents, higher rents and burden tenants who were unable to sustain those rents iniquitously and unfairly. So, Mr. Speaker, the former legislation brought in by the New Democratic government protected inner city tenants from this happening.

What we have now is a situation where, when a suite becomes vacant, the landlord can immediately pass on a new rent increase. Now, Mr. Speaker, as I've said, inner city apartment units turn over at a fairly substantial rate. I think that's a matter of

statistical documentation. So, Mr. Speaker, the Minister responsible for the protection of consumers — and presumably that would include tenants, Mr. Speaker, although it's not apparent on the face of this bill — has, one hopes only unwittingly, allowed the slum landlord to pass on unconsciously high rental increases to low income families.

Mr. Speaker, this is certainly a provision that hopefully no government should ever, in this day, support; certainly no government with a social conscience, no government that is making any serious effort to redress the inequities as between various levels within our economy. Here, Mr. Speaker, we have a provision that will only cause hardship, hardship to those who are least able to protect themselves. So it makes little sense particularly, Mr. Speaker, when one thinks by extrapolation that probably a good deal of the costs will be passed on to the Minister's government by way of social allowance increases. Presumably a lot of the people who live in these sorts of accommodations will be dependent on government for assistance, so we actually have a mechanism that assures that the taxpayers of the province of Manitoba will be impaled on the horns of the Minister's dilemma.

We don't mean to be intentionally facetious, Mr. Speaker, but with all due respect to the Minister, this is a nonsensical provision and one surely that was unintended by the government. We presume that the government will soon be indicating their willingness to deal with this matter and make appropriate deletions from the proposed bill.

Mr. Speaker, there are other provisions. I want to go on to rent control because that of course is the most substantive aspect of the bill before us. But I can tell you that there is going to be some other provisions which will substantially derogate from rights currently enjoyed by tenants, with respect to their rights to enjoy possession before they go to court in the cases of disputes. There are going to be changes which I think are less than obvious on the face of the amendments proposed in the bill but ones which will merit and deserve very serious and detailed consideration at the Law Amendment deliberation stage of debate.

I want to deal now, Mr. Speaker, with the final extinction of rent controls in Manitoba, the unceremonious dumping of any semblance of tenant protection in this regard by this government. Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that I was shocked — I think all members on this side were shocked — at the deliberateness, the callousness which the government has demonstrated in terminating consumer-tenant protection in this respect. It would appear, Mr. Speaker, that the rather self-serving and sometimes obsequious statements that were rendered by the Honourable Minister in this regard have now been proven to be little better than falsehoods.

Mr. Speaker, there seems to be, as the Honourable First Minister of this province said yesterday afternoon, I think in paraphrasing a quotation of Winston Churchill, a disparity as between the statements made by my honourable friends and the truth, as revealed by the legislation before this House this morning. Mr. Speaker, this government has been doing its best to effectively kill

rent control over the last two years. They've degraded the program. They've eroded it. They've done everything within their capacity to disembowel and vacate that area of responsibility.

We, just by way of preface, Mr. Speaker, felt that it was necessary to protect tenants who were in the position of bearing unconsciously high cost-of-living increases through rents. We felt, particularly when the anti-inflation program was under way, that it was absolutely essential if anything effective was going to be done with respect to the fighting of inflation, that something would have to be done with respect to rent control. So we brought in this program, Mr. Speaker.

The government has suggested, Mr. Speaker, that it is unnecessary because there is a high vacancy rate. They have suggested, Mr. Speaker, that their Shelter Allowance Subsidy Program is an effective substitute for rent controls. This, Mr. Speaker, is partially true, partially true but, Mr. Speaker, like so many things we hear from the other side these days, it is nothing better than a half-truth because as I indicated during the question period, Mr. Speaker, we have had reports; not from that government, Mr. Speaker, regrettably not from that government. They never fulfilled their responsibility, Mr. Speaker, to monitor the program; never, Mr. Speaker. They promised in this House on two or three occasions, over two or three years, that they would be continually monitoring the impact of decontrol processes and procedures. This morning we heard, Mr. Speaker, once again — because I asked the question intentionally — we heard the Minister stand in his place and indicate that these reports had not been prepared for that purpose; that he was not able to suggest to this House that those reports could sustain the government's decision to completely terminate the rent control program. But I'm digressing, Mr. Speaker, and it's not my intention to do that.

The nub of the matter, Mr. Speaker, is that shelter allowances are not an effective alternative to rent controls, not with respect to those on very low income, not to that dependent group within society.

Mr. Speaker, if anything effectual is going to be done with respect to that area, there has to be, as the social planning council as indicated in a very detailed report, a combination of rent subsidies in the high demand-low supply sector of the rent market. That is absolutely imperative because there has been a cutback in public housing, Mr. Speaker. People are being forced to deal almost exclusively now in our submission, Mr. Speaker, with the private housing sector and the only thing that will prevent the passing on, simply the passing on by way of higher rentals of those shelter subsidies is a form of rent control that will level the rate of increases, the rate of inflation, in that particular sector of the housing market.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Tories have blindly and I think rather naively eliminated much of public housing. Rent controls are now being terminated. They are simply relying on the private sector to be responsible and, Mr. Speaker, we think that sort of reliance is misplaced. We think that the reality is that there are indeed at the bottom end of the housing spectrum many landlords who will, in fact, take

advantage of the shelter allowance, the SAFER Program.

Mr. Speaker, that means that we're simply providing a conduit. Shelter allowances are nothing better than a conduit to provide those landlords with general revenues, taxpayers' moneys, paid to the government in order to help others. So, Mr. Speaker, there is nothing effective in this legislation before the House this morning that will protect the taxpayers of this province from that situation. Nothing whatsoever. Waste and mismanagement, Mr. Speaker, that is what this reflects and my honourable friends are familiar with that particular phrase. I believe they coined it and that, Mr. Speaker, is now what they are presenting in the form of this bill to this House. It reflects nothing but governmental waste and mismanagement. What has happened to acute protracted restraint, Mr. Speaker? This is not good business policy at all.

Mr. Speaker, now dealing with the mechanism that is supposed to protect tenants from exorbitant rental increases when rent controls fall away. The Minister has suggested that there will be an arbitration director who will be empowered to look, on his request, Mr. Speaker, because the legislation says that only he can propel the mechanism that will start the arbitration process. He says that is sufficient protection to tenants who are concerned about exorbitant increases when rent controls terminate. Well, Mr. Speaker, this is very naive.

Firstly it is naive because it's premised on the belief that this Minister will take deliberate action to protect consumers. In our submission that simply is not borne out on the basis of the record. There is nothing on the record to indicate that this particular Minister has those sort of concerns. Time after time, Mr. Speaker, we've called upon the Minister to act protectively with respect to consumer rights. Very seldom is there any response from that side of the House. So, Mr. Speaker, there does not appear to be any galvanized will that will precipitate that sort of review process, that sort of mechanism, the mechanism that's established in the bill from being implemented.

The Minister noted, I think, in a newspaper interview that there was provision in the bill for the rentalsman to send matters to the arbitration director for arbitration. Mr. Speaker, we take exception to that. We on this side feel that is not adequately stated in the bill. We do not believe that will be interpreted as being a provision or a sanction by the courts. But, Mr. Speaker, even if it were, even if the Minister were perfectly correct, the landlord, simply by filing a notice of objection seven days after receiving notice from the Director of Arbitrations office, can unilaterally conclude the matter. He can prevent the arbitration from taking place.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think it would be most naive for the Minister of Consumer Affairs to think, when at the cost of a 17-cent stamp a landlord can prevent an arbitration from occurring, that he has provided an appropriate mechanism for the arbitration of rental increases. Sometimes, Mr. Speaker, one has to presume that the Honourable Minister has very little respect for the intelligence of ordinary people. I mean no tenant, upon examining the provisions of that particular provision of the bill, would conclude

that he or she had any opportunity to approach arbitration with respect to rental increases.

Even this morning, Mr. Speaker, the Winnipeg Free Press on its editorial page has chastised and castigated the government for this particular aspect of the bill. They, too, conclude that this is and I'll quote. They say that, "since the landlord can enforce his rent increase without arbitration, it is unlikely that many landlords would voluntarily allow an arbitrator to scale it down." Well, Mr. Speaker, common sense again, why go to the trouble of an expensive hearing with respect to your, perhaps an entire block, dozens of suites, when you can post a 17-cent letter? It's just nonsense; it doesn't even really merit or warrant serious debate.

Also, the definition of what may constitute an excessive increase. The Minister says that if there are any excessive increases — and there is a provision here for a study of that on the Minister's request by the arbitration board — he says that if there are, he will monitor and that the arbitration board will make rulings in this regard. Mr. Speaker, the definition is laughable. It's laughable, Mr. Speaker. It's very very narrow and restrictive as is everything else in this particular bill. It talks about the rents being in the same general area.

The board can examine whether rents charged in the same comparable area, the same neighbourhood, for comparable situations and suites, are in just proportion to the affected premises. Mr. Speaker, that's ridiculous. We have a situation where if the rents in the same comparable situation are rising just as quickly as the affected suite, the complainant's suite, that's the end of it. They can't do anything about it, because all the landlords are gouging in that area.

You don't know what to make of this legislation, Mr. Speaker. It's so full of loopholes, so full of potential pitfalls and pratfalls, that it doesn't even seem to be a responsible attempt to address the problem. It almost looks like the Landlords Association wrote it. I can't, Mr. Speaker, suggest that many of the provisions of this Act can be taken seriously. So we have a situation where there is no binding arbitration unless the landlord is willing to go along with it and they can go off the hook by posting a letter. We have a situation where rental increases are never unjustified if all landlords are equally pursuing exorbitant increases. We have a situation where only the Minister can precipitate a final determination of a tenant's rights and we know that the Minister isn't willing to do that.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know what to say. We have a situation where we have shelter allowances which may now be misappropriated by greedy landlords. We're essentially vitiating all the best aspects of the SAFER Program. I wonder what the Minister responsible for the SAFER Program will have to say about this when he reads the bill. I presume he didn't, Mr. Speaker, because we all know that he's very concerned about government spending.

Mr. Speaker, I remember we were raked over the coals in 1976 for the proposal-call method used to initiate projects through MHRC. What will the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation say when he sees his SAFER Program gutted by the Minister responsible for Consumer Affairs? Did he really propose, when he decided to go into shelter

allowance and away from public housing, that the money spent, the capital money spent on public housing should simply be transferred into the pockets of some unscrupulous landlords? Was that really what the government had in mind? So we have the erosion of tenant's rights, Mr. Speaker, we have a very very retrogressive piece of legislation before us this morning. It's no wonder that we on this side have already indicated a willingness to doggedly resist the proclination of this particular bill. Mr. Speaker, one wonders whether the session will ever end because one presumes that if they were aware, hundreds of tenants would come flocking to the Law Amendments Committee with their notices of rent increases in hand.

Mr. Speaker, I don't find the protective element that the Minister of Consumer Affairs detailed to the Member for St. Johns and questions after his explanatory remarks. He says that there will be protection, that there is adequate protection here for tenants who have already notices. Mr. Speaker, I don't so. I think those tenants are well along the way to —(Interjection) — the Member for Kildonan suggested being taken and I suppose that's precisely what it amounts to. The Minister is simply allowing those people to be fleeced. They are not going to be protected and we've all received calls. Those people who are being affected by 28-percent increases, 27-percent increases, so on and so forth, and there are numerous such cases, Mr. Speaker.

Last night I attended a meeting. A gentleman told me his rent was going from 128 — it was being increased by 67.00. I received a phone call yesterday from a lady who lived on Broadway in an older suite near Donald Street who told me that her rent was going up 28 percent. This is a walk-up block on Broadway. Mr. Speaker, one wonders what the government is thinking of.

Certainly we appreciate that it's not within their philosophy to intercede in the marketplace in any circumstances, but if they are going to evacuate responsibility in that regard, at least they can do it humanely and in a businesslike fashion. But they haven't done that, Mr. Speaker, they have simply created a vacuum and greedy landlords are going to fill it. For the record, Mr. Speaker, I'm not suggesting that all landlords are bad and that all landlords are greedy, but we all know that there is cause for concern in this regard. That is a fact of life. I don't think that anybody, any responsible person in this House would suggest otherwise. It seems to be an unfortunate aspect of human nature. Flawed as we are, we tend at times to be greedy and, Mr. Speaker, it's up to us to provide laws that will balance the relative positions and rights of various classes of people within society.

That seems to be the major flaw, Mr. Speaker, because this legislation indicates that the government doesn't care. Once again they say that we're out of the inflationary cycle in housing but it's obvious, Mr. Speaker, that in providing this legislation that may lead to a further inflationary explosion in cycle in housing, that they're not worried about trying to stop that situation from occurring again. What's happening, Mr. Speaker, is they're simply opening the door and saying, well, it happened once, we hope it doesn't happen again, but if it does, well, gee, what can be done? That

seems to be the world view of the Minister. What can be done? A lot can be done, Mr. Speaker, and I want him to remember that rent controls still exist in Conservative bastions across North America and Europe. I want him to remember they still exist in Britain. Mrs. Thatcher did not, in her wisdom, choose to intercede and lift all rent controls in that country. They still exist in France, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Giscard d'Estaing did not in his wisdom, move to repeal the legislation in that country. They still exist in many states in America, Mr. Speaker, republican states, Mr. Speaker, as well as democratic states. New York still has provision, Mr. Speaker, as do I think many other states. I even believe, Mr. Speaker, they may exist still in Canada in certain jurisdictions.

So, Mr. Speaker, there is absolutely no wisdom in what the Minister is doing. If he were to have provided a mechanism in this legislation to protect low income people; if he would have provided a humane way of decontrolling middle-income suites, we might have been able to commend the legislation, Mr. Speaker, and suggest that although it was, from our point of view, distasteful, that it represented from their point of view common sense. But it doesn't do that, Mr. Speaker, it's inane and illogical from a Conservative's point of view equally as from a New Democrat's point of view.

This, Mr. Speaker, in summation is the flaw inherent in this bill. Why, Mr. Speaker, is such an important piece of legislation that will affect literally, tens of thousands of people, and in a very very dramatic way, Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order. The honourable member has five minutes.

MR. CORRIN: Why, Mr. Speaker, is such a piece of legislation being brought in at the last minute, the end of June, why, Mr. Speaker? The Legislature commenced its sittings, Mr. Speaker, on February 18th. The Decontrol Program was in place what? Two years ago, at least two years ago. It was announced; there was ample opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to have this bill prepared in anticipation of that in order that it could be debated, in order that its provisions could be made known to the public. But, Mr. Speaker, that's not the style of the government opposite. Mr. Speaker, I don't like to suggest it, and I do so with respect to those members who did not participate in it, it is simply, Mr. Speaker, being railroaded through this Assembly. That is effectively what's happening. I do not believe, Mr. Speaker, I cannot believe that this bill could not have been tabled in this Assembly three and a half, four months ago, I can't Mr. Speaker, given the nature of this material, I can't believe it couldn't have been put before us for debate then.

What we had, Mr. Speaker, is an emergency debate provoked and precipitated by our side this morning during question period; we asked for early reading; we were prepared, Mr. Speaker, to debate it immediately but, Mr. Speaker, an injunction. It makes no sense to debate this sort of legislation during the Speed-up. Mr. Speaker, if any provisions of this bill are debated after 10 o'clock in the evening, I would consider it certainly an outlandish landmark in the history of this Assembly. It would be simply outrageous that the rights of people should be

so trammelled, because, Mr. Speaker, this bill is very important. This bill could be the difference between putting a family on marginal low income and welfare. This could break the back of a working person. Mr. Speaker, should that sort of legislation be debated at 1:00 o'clock in the morning or 2:00 o'clock in the morning by bleary-eyed legislators and government members' intent on forcing the passage of its content? Mr. Speaker, I don't want to seem self-serving. I know that the reply — and it's so standard, Mr. Speaker, — is that all governments do it.

Well, Mr. Speaker, dammit, maybe it's time to reconsider what all governments do, because Ontario has two sessions of the Legislature and several of the provinces — as a matter of fact, most of the provinces are on the semester system, as you are well aware of, Mr. Speaker, and they don't force this sort of legislation through any more, not in Saskatchewan and not in Alberta, not in Quebec and not in Ontario. —(Interjection)— This isn't back-to-work legislation. That isn't an emergency matter that has to be put through in a day or two; not that we would necessarily agree with it if it were, but if we take each case on its own merits, Mr. Speaker, three years in its evolution, Mr. Speaker, and here it is in the final days of this session. So we're going to deal with this most important piece of legislation in the dog days of this Assembly's sitting.

Mr. Speaker, things can be done better. The member opposite responsible for this bill in my first year, Mr. Speaker, used to with great regularity, rise in order to correct procedural deficiencies in my approach towards the business of this House. He used to, I thought rather zealously, chide me and upgrade me every time any of my questions or submissions, Mr. Speaker, were in any way in his submission, inconsistent with the rules of this House. And, Mr. Speaker, he spoke so authoritatively and with such conviction, he seemed to be virtually the guardian of parliamentary process. Mr. Speaker, not any more, not any more. If he had that mantle, Mr. Speaker, and he won it, he's lost it and he's shamed himself.

This bill should have been in this House in February or March. This was priority legislation, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, just like there shouldn't have been an interview on the front page of the Winnipeg Free Press before this was debated here today. —(Interjection)— It's nonsense? It would have been okay, Mr. Speaker, if not for the fact that as in McGregor, there were misleading statements. Mr. Speaker, if the Minister is responsible he'll read that article and he will take me to task for what I have said and he will rise again in conclusion on second reading and make those points. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable member's time is up. The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MRS. WESTBURY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That was a very moving address from the Honourable Member for Wellington; he obviously knows his subject very well. He moved me with his speech, and I hope he moved other members of the House, including the Member for Minnedosa, who several times during the speech and as I started mine, made

flippant remarks from his seat. Really, Mr. Speaker, I had hoped that the few members in the House would have listened to the remarks of the Honourable Member for Wellington and perhaps hoped that they would learn something about the difficulties of living in tenancy arrangements within the city of Winnipeg.

The Minister's attitude throughout this session, whenever he's been questioned on the matter of what is going to happen after rent controls go off, has been one of the utmost complacency, and I see he's not even staying to listen to the debate on his bill. His incredible complacency is really rather an understatement. This is an incredible situation to me, Mr. Speaker, that with his offhand attitude throughout this session, whenever he's been asked about rent controls and he introduces his bill, and 40 minutes later leaves the House while it's still being debated? —(Interjection)—

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I think it's been pointed out on numerous occasions that it is not parliamentary to refer to the absence or presence of any member in this Chamber. The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MRS. WESTBURY: I apologize to you, Mr. Speaker. I just was rather shocked that this could have happened.

I'm forced to believe that the Minister doesn't have the faintest understanding of what it is like to be elderly and on a fixed income in this city — it's the same in other cities in this province — but it's exceptionally bad to be an elderly tenant on a fixed income in the inner city of Winnipeg, Mr. Speaker. We know that many of the members of this House are tenants during the life of the session, Mr. Speaker, but they receive 40-a-day living allowance. I wonder if the Minister receives the 40-a-day living allowance, and I suggest that if he does, he doesn't understand the plight of those people who are dependent upon rental accommodation, and who are trying to keep going under rising inflation and on a fixed income.

It's been told to me that the Minister receives this living allowance even if he goes home at night, or even when he goes home at night — and I don't understand how that fits in with the rules, because I thought this was for living in the city — but I'm suggesting that the 40-per-day living allowance perhaps makes fuzzy the attitude of the Minister and his colleagues towards the plight of those people who don't have the benefit of a living allowance for their accommodation.

I have to regret that the First Minister did not see fit to appoint one of his inner-city MLAs as the Minister responsible for Rent Controls. I would hope that they would have more understanding, but when I look around the House today and see that, well, at last one inner city — I'm not allowed to say that people are absent, all right I won't refer to that, Mr. Speaker — I would just say that I had hoped that the inner-city MLAs would show their interest in the bill and participate in speaking to the bill. I hope that they participated in caucus. I can't understand how they could have, as part of a caucus, approved this heartless legislation that is before us today for second reading. —(Interjection)— Yes, there are a number of rural members here, and I commend them

for being here. I suppose they're here from choice, and not because they're Whips that they're to be here, and I hope that they are indeed learning something about the problems that exist in inner cities.

Mr. Speaker, the people are signing tenancy agreements now that come due at the end of September. We've been told that they're monitoring rent increases, and the bill calls for a monitoring of rent increases. The Minister shall direct the arbitration of the rents. How are these tenants going to have the confidence and the knowledge to appeal to the Minister? He's putting all the onus on the tenants to come to his office to appeal an unfair increase where there is an unfair increase. Some of these elderly people would be totally intimidated at the thought of coming to an official government office to appeal. Some of them don't know and won't know what is available to them. What they will do is move into gradually worsening apartments and have gradually worsening emotional problems because of their unhappiness and their despair, Mr. Speaker, and all they see and all they hear is an uncaring government. Some of these people have been fighting all their lives to have some security in their old age, for decent living in their old age. Some of them already have had to lower their standard of living, and I referred to that a few nights ago when speaking to the estimates for Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation.

Many of these people voted for this government because they believed that they were going to contain rising prices. That would be a joke if it wasn't so desperately sad. The Minister said, what about the SAFER Program. Well, my goodness, when they brought it in why didn't they tell us they were making it a gift to landlords? I'll refer to the SAFER Program a little later.

The government's restraint, and there has been restraint in some areas, the restraint has been in the areas that hurt those who are most vulnerable, Mr. Speaker. Restraint traditionally does this. It hurts those who can most easily be hurt. It hurts the elderly, the sick, the little children. It doesn't hurt the prosperous business person. It doesn't hurt legislators or their families. It hurts those who are least able to fight for their own rights. We have the retroactivity clause in this bill we referred to in question period, Mr. Speaker.

Another member asked, what protection is there for the tenant who has signed a lease, believing that he or she has some protection, because the Minister keeps saying that they have? What happens if someone signs a lease before Monday midnight agreeing to an increase, or accepting an increase, believing that they have a right to appeal and that they will have a fair hearing, because the Minister has said so? And people are trusting. Generally speaking, people are very trusting. They believe that when the Minister speaks, he speaks in facts. They believe they will have a fair hearing. All right. A month later, two months later, they have their hearing and their appeal is rejected. What happens to them? Are they stuck for the amount of the increase for the life of the lease? I think they are. I know they are, Mr. Speaker.

That's no protection. What do I say to the people in my constituency who say to me, I've received a

lease that has an increase of 30 percent, 28 percent? I mentioned the other evening that one woman has been told that her lease which has to come to her today or Monday, is going to have an increase of 48 percent, an elderly widow. Mr. Speaker, what do I say to her? Do I say, yes, sign it, and appeal, trust the Minister? I wouldn't say that, Mr. Speaker, because I don't think the Minister gives the darn.

I don't think he gives a darn about that elderly woman or about any of the other elderly men and women or about the poor tenants, the poor meaning poor in income, poor in resources, Mr. Speaker. He has not shown that he has concern for these people. He has not demonstrated in the four months that this Legislature has been sitting that he has concern for these people.

SAFER Program. I keep looking around for some one to talk to. This is a subsidy to the landlords, Mr. Speaker, and the Member for Wellington spoke eloquently on that. It's a subsidy to the landlords unless it is accompanied by some continuing form of rent control and as soon as the rent controls come off, the SAFER Program can go sky high, and where are the taxpayers protected? It has always been the position that I have taken that any shelter program has to be accompanied by some form of rent controls, Mr. Speaker.

I've just had a note handed to me that one of constituents has received her new lease. The rent has gone up from 286 a month to 330 in her new lease. She has no air conditioning. Her kitchen is 25 years old and it has not been renovated. She pays her own utilities. She's had no improvements in her suite in the three years since she moved in. In that apartment block there are two washers and dryers in the basement for 48 suites. It's hardly a luxury apartment, Mr. Speaker.

The Member for Wolseley, in his compassion said, what is her SAFER subsidy, Mr. Speaker. Apparently she doesn't qualify for SAFER subsidy, Mr. Speaker. She is, however, a woman alone on a fixed income.

Now having spoken on the matter of the rent controls and my disgust with the attitude of this government on the matter of rent controls, Mr. Speaker, I want to move to the condominium section and speak in principle on the amendments, the section that applies to The Condominium Act. Again, here's another instance where tenants are not being protected by the government in which they trusted, by the government which they helped to elect. There is nothing here which indicates that any planning input should go into the provision of condominiums. Mr. Speaker, this is still just being left to purchasers, someone can go and buy an apartment block and try to convert it tomorrow, and have perhaps a two-month waiting period regardless of these tenants, many of whom have, perhaps on the death of a spouse, have sold the family home which was really their major resource, and have sold the family home because they're having difficulty keeping up with it, looking after the yard and keeping up with the interior, and moved into an apartment. And they believe that the proceeds from that family home are going to provide them with those little extras that they had always expected to be able to have when they retired. Tickets to the games perhaps. Tickets to the ballet perhaps, or theatre centre, whatever their particular interest is. The pension that they

provided for themselves throughout their working days hardly covers these things anymore. I'm not talking now about the very poor or the poor. I'm talking about the person who has been a middle-income person. And they're planning on spending the proceeds of the sale of the family home for rent for good accommodation for themselves, perhaps a little trip south in the winter. And I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that those people are entitled to those expectations. Now they're being required to purchase their apartments, or move. I have constituents who have moved three and four times in the past three and four years because of conversion to condominiums that are following them from one apartment block to another.

There is no protection for these people from this government, Mr. Speaker. I also want to point to what may be really a printing error, that when they refer several times to tenancy agreement, they don't have written tenancy agreement, so I think this really is an error on someone's part that can perhaps be corrected.

Mr. Speaker, as you perhaps know, I have a bill before the House with amendments to The Condominium Act also. I'm speaking to this Bill 83, and suggesting that the amendments to The Condominium Act are inadequate, again insensitive, again unprotective of the rights of people, the rights of tenants in particular and . . . well, they're intended to help the owners and the landlords, that they're not even really going to help them very much, because the tenants in the city are not going to put up forever with the treatment they're getting from this harsh Conservative government, Mr. Speaker.

The tenants are going to demand, and I imagine we'll be seeing this at Law Amendments, they're going to demand the protection of their rights as consumers. These amendments to The Condominium Act are very very harsh; they're very very harsh. I suggest that there should be an amendment in here requiring some input from the community committee, whose responsibility it has been and should continue to be to provide for certain accommodation as it's needed in the city. I would be very pleased to have referred to committee whether existing rent or property should become condominium property and whether the people who are dependent upon rental property to live, should be forced to move to other neighbourhoods where perhaps they don't know anyone.

This has happened in my constituency. They're finding that rental property of the type and rent that they can afford to pay is no longer available in that particular area. They tell me they have to go to Henderson Highway and Henderson Highway is a very nice place, it's a very nice district, but they don't know anyone there. It's not where they raised their children and went to church and worked in the community clubs. They want to stay around the same area of town that they have lived in all their lives, Mr. Speaker.

So I am saying that these amendments to The Condominium Act should include a planning process for the city of Winnipeg. I would like them to include the community committee, because those are the people closest to the particular area. I believe that there should be protection for those tenants whose written leases are allowed to run out now at the

present time. Some of the landlords have been allowing leases to lapse, waiting six months, and been going ahead. Well, the Rentalsman assured us at a meeting last night that there is still protection, but the tenants don't know that, they don't know that. Nobody sends them a notice in the mail saying, you are entitled to this if your landlord doesn't renew your lease. There has been no attempt on the part of government to educate the tenants as to their rights.

I have had a number of meetings with tenants in apartment blocks that were threatened with condominium conversion, six or seven of them in the past five or six months, and there we tried to tell the tenants what their rights are. But otherwise, Mr. Speaker, there has been no attempt by this government to inform them of their rights. This is a hardship for the elderly when they feel they have to move, especially when they have to move three or four times in a few years. It's a hardship financially. I notice that there is provision in the bill for paying their moving costs or a month's rent, whichever is the lesser. That should be whichever is the greater, Mr. Speaker. The landlord has the choice of paying a few dollars to move their few possessions or of giving them a month's rent. The landlord has all the choice in that, whichever is the lesser. Make it whichever is the greater and I'll believe that perhaps there is some attempt at justice on the part of this Minister and his consumer legislation for condominium renters.

The rights of the tenants should be protected and I just want to tell you, as of last October, what the rights of tenants were in New York, where apartments are converted into condominiums or co-operatives. It was signed last summer by the New York governor. Apartment dwellers, 62 years of age and over in New York who choose not to purchase a condominium may not be evicted if they have been tenants for at least two years and have a total income of less than 30,000 per year. I don't think that goes far enough. I think it should be six months, but at least two years and with a restricted fixed income — some compassion showing in New York City, Mr. Speaker, and I never thought that the day would come when I said the legislators in New York State were more compassionate than the legislators in the province of Manitoba — (Interjection) — the government of Manitoba because I think hearts on this side of the House are squeezing, they're hurting for the plight of these people, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to speak a little further about this planning situation, the whole business of having the planning have some reference to the city of Winnipeg because I know that some of the apartment owners have been suggesting that Westbury is trying to place a moratorium on condominiums and I'm not. I'm not, Mr. Speaker, there is a place for condominiums. I have said that for many many years, long before they became popular in this city. My own parents in New Zealand lived in a condominium apartment. We need to have protection. The owners who are circulating the rumour that I'm trying to place a moratorium are not speaking with knowledge of the facts, or if they are speaking with knowledge of the facts, they're distorting the facts, Mr. Speaker.

I want to read from an article in the Des Moines Register of December last which was sent to me and

it's actually a repeat of a commentary on CBS by a Jack Neufield and it expresses the way condominium conversion is being looked at by people in other parts of this continent. He says, "conversion is the process whereby a developer, usually backed by a bank, converts rental apartments into units that usually are sold to more affluent people. This process is creating a dangerous shortage of rental apartments. It favours the wealthy who can afford to buy their own apartments, but it creates a hardship for the elderly, those living on fixed incomes and for the average working family already squeezed by the general spiral of inflation. Condo-conversions cause a great displacement problem. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, about 80 percent of renters choose to move rather than buy and conversions further diminish the number of rental apartments available in a market already tilted against tenants." Then they give figures in different US cities.

They go on, "the condo craze must be brought under some rational controls. Greedy landlords should not be permitted to ration shelter by price. Thankfully, representative Rosenthal of Queens, New York, has introduced legislation to remedy this inequity. Rosenthal's law would do four things. (1) He does set a three-year moratorium on condominium conversions; (2) Require real estate developers to provide up to 400 in relocation assistance to all displaced tenants; (3) Prohibit federal community block grants from going to localities that do not restrict conversions or guarantee adequate housing; and (4) Change the federal tax code to treat the developer's profit as ordinary income and not capital gains.

Then they conclude, "Conversions are popular because they generate fast, fat profits for the developer but for the majority of city dwellers, they cause economic hardship, physical dislocation, psychological anguish and sometimes forced eviction." And I read that, Mr. Speaker, because that article shows some sensitivity to the plights of those whose apartments are being converted.

In the case this is not a Winnipeg problem, this is a North American problem and it behooves government to protect the citizens who are being taken advantage of by those landlords who are ruthless and I do not believe all landlords are ruthless. There have been condominium conversions in which there's been no problem whatsoever with the tenants, in my constituency, as well. There have been others where the tenants have been threatened, that if they don't sign quickly they will all be evicted and that's not permitted by the Rentalsman either, but they don't know that until they're told, Mr. Speaker. They don't know that until one of them might pick up the phone to phone their MLA, who might, make the decision to look into it and see if they can be evicted. But this happened only last week, in one apartment block in my constituency. The owners called a meeting of the tenants. They did not ask the Rentalsman to be present, and when the tenants objected to the conversion to condominium at this meeting, the representative of the owners said something to this effect. It was a definite threat, if you do not agree, if you give us any trouble, we will throw you all out of here, and make the conversion and renovate the

premises and start from scratch again. Now they are already doing the conversion with the tenants in there and the tenants, I think, have now obtained advice to the effect that the conversion, since it can be carried out while the tenants are still in there, they can not be thrown out, but they did not know that and they were preparing to leave. Now that's a harsh landlord, Mr. Speaker, or his representative. That's not a person who's concerned with his tenants.

I want to say in wrapping up, Mr. Speaker, that on the whole matter of the removal of rent controls and in the condominium section of this bill, demonstrates a lack of concern on the part of this government and particularly on the part of this Minister, which we should have anticipated having watched it throughout from February, whenever he was asked about rent controls, there were these sort of offhand remarks to the effect that increases will be monitored. How is the monitoring of increases going to help these people? How can they believe that the monitoring will help them? They will say, who cares; it's only me; a little old person or a poor person; what rights do I have against the powerful and wealthy; because they are in despair now, Mr. Speaker. They truly are coming to believe that this government, for which many of them voted in 1977, just does not give a darn; just does not give a darn about how they live; about what happens to them when they become unwell; what happens to them as they get older; the lack of preventative health care, the lack of housing; new housing.

I asked for figures on housing the other night. We never got them from the Minister — his sort of debonair attitude of, "I'm all right Jack." Mr. Speaker, I hope some of the members on the government side are troubled by this. I don't believe that they're all as heartless as the legislation that's coming forward would indicate. I believe that somebody there must be concerned about, as I am, what happens to some of these people on fixed income, Mr. Speaker. Because if restraint is hurting anyone, these are the people that are being hurt. They're at the mercy of the greedy. They have nowhere to go except to people who they feel probably reflect the uncaring attitude of the government, since they are employed by the government, although I don't think that's necessarily true but that's the way that they are inclined to feel about this.

I think we have to fight with all our might against this bill. I think we have to fight for the retention, in some form, of rent controls, making allowances for necessary maintenance and repairs. Yes, I do believe that is one of the failings of the rent control and one of the reasons the landlords were so hostile to it, because they could not redeem their expenses. They could not maintain their premises. So that has to be taken into consideration. But we must fight, all of us who care, including any of the government members who care, for these people. Conscience should come before their duty to their caucus, I suggest. If they care, stand up and say so. I'm waiting, hoping, that someone over there will stand up and say, I believe in the retention of rent controls, in some form or another, with any conditions they want to attach. Has one of them got the heart to do that? We'll be waiting to see, Mr. Speaker.

In the meantime, I suggest that the condominium provisions of this bill are just about as ruthless as the removal of rent controls. The tenants are going to be displaced. They are becoming desperate. This leads to emotional illness and that in turn leaves to physical illness and we're not even providing them with places to go when they become physical ill. It's hopeless, no-win, hopeless situation for the old person, on a fixed income, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for St. Boniface, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, would you call Bill No. 73, adjourned debate on second reading?

BILL NO. 73 — AN ACT TO AMEND THE CIVIL SERVICE SUPERANNUATION ACT

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 73, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Logan. The Honourable Member for Logan.

MR. WILLIAM JENKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I just want to say a few words on this bill before we pass it to committee. We have looked at the bill and looked at the amendments that are here before us and we find that they are progressive. They are measures that are in many other pension plans. The one for instance, that I can mention is workers who are on workers' compensation, will now be allowed to contribute to their pension plan, and so ensuring that they will not lose any compensable time during the time that they are off on workers' compensation. Others that allow employees of agencies to become members of the superannuation fund is a good amendment and one dealing with people who are elected to national office of government employees association, allowing such a person to contribute to the plan, is one that is fairly standard. I know it's one that's standard in the pension plan that I belong to in the railway. I would have suggested perhaps that there might have been a proviso in here and perhaps it's one that the Minister and the government can look at, that where members of the government employees' association, or the members of the IBEW, which I think, are also members of the pension plan — but one proviso we have on the railways is that those who are elected to public office are also allowed to contribute to their pension plan. I know in my own particular case I'm allowed to contribute to my pension plan, paying my share and the company's share to the plan while I am not at work. I think that is a proviso that encourages people to run for public office, that they don't lose their compensable service during the time that they may be elected to public office and may have to be away on leave of absence. I think that's a proviso that I would suggest that the Minister look at in future. I

think that the suggestion that employees may elect to contribute to the pension plan when they're on educational leave. It also is a good one, and gives them the opportunity of being able to — because they may be on reduced earnings while they're on educational leave — up to 18 months, when they come back to work, to be able to make that time up. I think that's a good amendment.

There are others in here that I say we've looked at, and I think that they're good. When government introduced this legislation, in my estimation, that is not bad. I'm not averse to saying that the amendments are ones that we agree with, and I suggest to the Minister the suggestion that I threw out to him is one I know you won't be able to hear, but perhaps in another session the Minister may look at that and come in with it. With that, Mr. Speaker, we're prepared to have the bill go to committee.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, would you call Bill No. 31.

BILL NO. 31 THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS ACT

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 31. The Honourable Member for St. Johns has five minutes. The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, last night I was cajoling, entreating, pleading, threatening, I was doing everything possible to try to get members on the government side to say something about this Public Schools Act. Two things happened.

One, I was somewhat nonplused when the Attorney-General said, oh, I spoke, and I couldn't remember it at the time. But later on I did recall — and my impression was he spoke only on the question of education to private schools — and I went to answer it this morning and confirmed that the Honourable, the Attorney-General said nothing whatsoever about the public school system, about The Public Schools Act. He devoted himself entirely to responding to the Member for Inkster on the question of aid to private schools. And of course he had to speak because he had to defend himself from a rather foolish comment he made from his seat.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, members who speak from their seats take the risk of being challenged on what they say and they should know full well they have no protection for being called to task for what they call out and what they say when they're seated. The Attorney-General was embarrassed by the fact that he made a foolish comment and then he had to make a speech to account for it, but then he went on to say other things about the principle. He says that the amendment eliminates and clears up a step in the procedure. The one point that I think was probably a very poor argument was that from the economical point of view it is simply apparent from the figures, it is cheaper from the public's point of view for a child to receive his education in an independent school rather than a public school.

Absolutely inexcusable argument, Mr. Speaker. If that were the case then all you do is cut out all public schools and then it would be much cheaper from the public's point of view. That's why, Mr. Speaker, I didn't remember his speech at all. Now that I went to the trouble to reread it, I intend to forget it as quickly as I can because it's not worth remembering. He should have been speaking on a private schools act, not The Public Schools Act.

Mr. Speaker, today's newspaper informs me that the Minister for Education said to the press, I guess — he didn't say it to the House and no one on his side did — said that there's really no philosophy in this bill and I'm very proud of it. There you are, Mr. Speaker, two statements: I'm very proud of this bill. There's no philosophy in it. So what is there to be proud of, Mr. Speaker? Nothing, it's just a journeyman's aspect that I referred to yesterday and that's what he's proud of? So he's a good mechanic. I compliment him on being a good mechanic, Mr. Speaker. Even then it is questionable.

Mr. Speaker, we mentioned specifics. We referred to direct disagreements in principle with aspects of this bill. No one has answered it and that's the point I want to leave my statement with, that — I just ended with a preposition, I mustn't do that, Mr. Speaker — I'll just continue by saying that no one on the government side has said anything in response to the specific attacks we made. The point I was making yesterday is you cannot have a one-sided debate. It's almost like the expression of trying to listen to one hand clapping, and if all we hear is the Minister who introduces the bill and says nothing — and I think that that's true too — he introduced a bill, he gave a summary of its contents. He did not speak anything about what's involved in the bill for a good reason, Mr. Speaker, because nothing is involved in the bill, as he is reported in the press to agree, from the standpoint of policy direction and, in his words, philosophy.

Now, Mr. Speaker, he wants to stand up and respond and I'm sure — I'm not sure, I think — he will deal with the points that have been raised on this side and then we will not have the opportunity, when debating the bill in principle, to respond, to carry on this debate. This is terrible planning on the part of government; it is a rejection and a repudiation of the real principle of legislative debate. I have to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that again in the press report, the Minister implied that he didn't direct the backbench to keep quiet, they just chose to keep quiet. I don't know which is a more justifiable response, whether he directed them or whether they chose to keep quiet.

If they chose to do it without a plan, then it is clear to me, Mr. Speaker, that they have no interest whatsoever in debating the issues that were raised by the Opposition. And if that's the approach they have then that, Mr. Speaker, is a further indication of the arrogance of the government, which doesn't permit an adjournment on a bill such as this, which happened yesterday, doesn't permit any opportunity for others to review what had been said, but rather go ahead like a steamroller and get it through, and that's the way they seem to be wanting to operate. There is still an opportunity for anybody with guts or concern, or just an attitude to education, to speak

on this from the government side. The fact that they don't, I believe, condemns them.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Seven Oaks.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Brandon East, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: I want to, at this time, bring to the honourable members attention, we have Y.C. Ma, professor of the University of Manitoba, in the Speaker's Gallery, and he has as his guest, Dr. Tao Ching, Director of the Rehabilitation Centre in Taipei, Taiwan. Dr. Tao Ching is attending the Rehab Conference here in Winnipeg. On behalf of all members, we welcome you this morning.

COMMITTEE CHANGES

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Logan.

MR. JENKINS: Mr. Speaker, I first want to make some changes on committee. I would like to move the Honourable Member for Burrows in place of the Honourable Member for St. George, the Honourable Member for Transcona for the Honourable Member for Rupertsland, on Agriculture, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Are those changes agreeable? (Agreed)

POINT OF ORDER

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Logan.

MR. JENKINS: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. This morning, when the Government House Leader indicated to the House that there was unanimous consent for the House to sit tomorrow morning, he was under the agreement that I negotiated last evening with the Government House Leader and the Government House Whip, with a proviso dealing with a number of bills of professional nature. The Government House Leader and the Government Caucus Whip are not able to fulfill their part of the agreement and, therefore, Mr. Speaker, I must say to you and I say to members of the House that we are not prepared to give unanimous consent for the House to sit tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, let me indicate, yesterday afternoon as we entered the Chamber at 2:00 o'clock, the Member for St. Johns, the Member for Kildonan, the House Opposition Leader and I had a discussion about certain matters. We referred to the Saturday arrangement in lieu of Monday. The Member for St. Johns indicated his concern about professional bills, but it was clearly indicated then

that the arrangement on Saturday in lieu of Monday was independent of the concern that had been expressed from their side as to consideration of the professional bills.

In any event, Mr. Speaker, when I indicated to the House the sitting, and indicated there was unanimous consent, Mr. Speaker, there was no — particularly with the Member for Fort Rouge and the Member for Inkster, whom we discussed this matter with earlier in the week — there was no opposition from anyone, Mr. Speaker, and I suggest to you that no member can now raise this subject matter and attempt to withdraw a unanimous consent, that it has already been decided.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Seven Oaks.

MR. MILLER: On the same point of order, the understanding reached last night was, as far as I was concerned, based on an assumption, an assumption which I was led to believe would be fulfilled in a caucus by the government party this morning. When the House Leader rose, I had every reason to believe, and did believe, that in fact he was advising the House that there would be a sitting on Saturday and it was based on the understanding that the caucus had met and the certain understandings that had been arrived at indeed been fulfilled.

It was based on that understanding that I did not rise in my seat. But, Mr. Speaker, to suggest that because I did not rise in my seat then, because I was misled then, to deny me now the right, with all due respect, I question it. I did not rise in my seat because I assumed that the discussions last night had meaning, would be honoured and would be recognized. There was no knowledge on my part that in fact apparently the government caucus didn't meet this morning or, if they did, they didn't deal with the matter.

Mr. Speaker, I have every right to believe, when told, that they were going to meet and that they had met, and I simply assumed that the House Leader was fulfilling that understanding and that is why I sat in my seat. But now that I know otherwise, Mr. Speaker, I am not prepared to grant voluntary leave.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Logan.

MR. JENKINS: Mr. Speaker, speaking again to the point of order, it was my distinct understanding, the meeting I had with the Government House Leader, the meeting I had with the Government Caucus Whip, that they were to approach the Minister of Health, who was supposed to be here this morning. They were supposed to meet in caucus prior to this House coming into session. As the Member for Seven Oaks has said, it was only when we checked with the Government House Leader and the Government Caucus Whip that we found out that they didn't fulfill their part of the bargain.

As I said the other day, Mr. Speaker, if this House is going to operate, there has to be co-operation. We are prepared to co-operate, but co-operation, Mr. Speaker, is a two-way street. And if you can't deliver the goods over there, then I don't know what we can expect when you come and you want to sit. It's you

people who want to sit tomorrow; it's not me that wants to sit tomorrow. You're the ones who don't want to lose your 40.00 a day, right? — (Interjection)— It's not a cheap shot. That is exactly what you want. You want to sit tomorrow so you won't miss your four days . . .

All right, but if you're going to make agreements, then you should be able to live up to your agreements. As far as I am concerned, I am not ready to believe anything from anyone over on that side of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, on the point of order. The main point is, when the announcement took place, there was unanimous consent to it and I suggest on that matter alone, that the sittings sit as they were called this morning.

With respect to the other matters raised by the Member for Logan, Mr. Speaker, he was here last night. He didn't know what his House Leader had said to me in the afternoon, and I suggest to you that's not the first time that has happened. I suggest, if he's got a problem, what they'd better do in the first place is talk the problem out in their caucus and come to a common position instead of us having to deal with 23 individual opinions.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Johns on a point of order.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, on the point of order, maybe we can go back to behaving like lawyers do when they start recording everything in writing. As far as I'm concerned, Mr. Speaker, the conversation I had with the Attorney-General, the House Leader, along with our leader, was that I had no concern about the Saturday or Monday but I had deep concern — (Interjection)— No, I never used that word "independent" and the member didn't, so, Mr. Speaker, as far as I'm concerned, I was . . .

MR. MERCIER: You did so, you did so. Tell the truth for a change.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. We can only have one speaker at a time.

The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, what I said was that I was concerned . . .

MR. MERCIER: You said it was independent.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. We can only have one speaker at a time.

The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I'm still not concerned about whether it's the Saturday or Monday. The fact is that I was told that I would be given an opportunity and should seek out the Minister of Health in order to discuss this other aspect and, Mr. Speaker, I sought for him all day yesterday; was told by his secretary he would not be in all day. I was told last night that there was an arrangement made that I could meet with him today

and there is no sight of him and on that basis, Mr. Speaker, I accept the statements made by the Honourable Members for Logan and Seven Oaks that there was a breach of the understanding.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak briefly to a point of privilege, the point of privilege being in effect on my being a member of the Legislative Assembly. The Deputy Leader of the New Democratic Party has the right to speak on my behalf; the House Leader of the Opposition has the right to speak on my behalf; and the Whip of the New Democratic Party has the right to speak on my behalf; but nevertheless I would have to argue that regardless of the circumstances leading up to leave being granted, once leave has been granted it has been granted.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

MR. FOX: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to go over some of the negotiations that have taken place to date, and I want to indicate that I was absent last night and I was informed that certain commitments had been made last night. Those commitments were explained to me, and those commitments this morning I'm informed, were not kept. Now, in my negotiations with the Honourable House Leader, I have continually stressed that the agreement that he and I were arriving at was contingent upon reaching an agreement in respect to the professional bills. There is no doubt in my mind that the Attorney-General is totally aware of that and that I said I wanted that commitment, and he and I agreed that I would urge the Honourable Member for St. Johns to get in touch with the Minister of Health, who apparently is the only one who can make a decision in respect to these bills, and unfortunately to date, right up to this very hour, we have not been able to get a commitment from the Minister of Health because he hasn't been in the House for the last three days, and that's where the situation is.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I find the affairs that are apparently carrying on somewhat interesting to me, however, I do have another problem and that is to carry on the business of the House and we are now into Private Members' Hour. —(Interjection)— The point of order that was raised, I think, I would hope that members can solve this thing before the end of the Private Members' Hour.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

MR. SPEAKER: The first item of business in Private Members' Hour on Fridays is Proposed Resolutions.

RESOLUTION NO. 30 — UNITED WAY COMMUNITY DAY CARE STUDY

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MRS. WESTBURY: Well, Mr. Speaker, this is a surprise. I had been told that everybody was going home today at 12:30, and my material is in the other room. However, I will speak to my motion. I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre:

WHEREAS since October 1977 day care fees paid by parents have increased 41.6 percent; and

WHEREAS since 1976 The Provincial Government Maintenance Grant has remained at 500 per child space per annum, and this method of funding facilities is considered inadequate and ignores availability and accessibility of facilities in different areas; and

WHEREAS it is essential that heads of one parent families be permitted to enter the labour force and escape income poverty; and

WHEREAS unlicensed centres continue to operate often to the detriment of the children in their care; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the government of Manitoba give consideration to adopting a policy of supporting the recommendations of the United Way Community Day Care Study.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MRS. WESTBURY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated I have left even my copy of the resolution in the other room because I had been assured that this House was breaking at 12:30 today as has been the usual procedure. I will speak now remembering as best I can the order in which the Whereases come. I did ask a Page to bring me a copy of the resolution so I could speak to it.

It is rather disheartening to try to speak on a matter of so much concern, Mr. Speaker, when I know that everybody in the House is really thinking more about whether they are going to work on Monday or not or whether they are going to work on Saturday or not or whether some committee is going to be called in punishment tonight — in punishment of those who are balking at some apparent agreement that's been made. However I guess at least there are a few people around in the House to hear whatever I have to say so that might be a nice change, too.

I do feel, and I thank the honourable member for supplying me with a copy of the resolution, that it's time that we started to look at the whole day care field as being some kind of preventative program which might eliminate the problems that improperly cared for children might have in their later years, Mr. Speaker, and this has never been the approach. I believe when we are talking about costs of day care, that we should be looking at cost benefits because every psychologist knows of the problems that are encountered by those children who have had inadequate care for their most important years — for those years before they would go to grade one at school. I am suggesting that this is not provided at the present time. There are inadequate day care spaces; there is a need for a Day Care Act in order to control the provision of day care; there is a need for licensing to be the same for the day care centres

as for the family day care. We hear, in fact most of the stories of abuse that we hear only come to us after there has been a complaint; after there has been either neglect of children or some parent has become angry at the kind of family day care that is being provided.

Mr. Speaker, not very long ago, last year, there was an instance where the . . . Mr. Speaker, is a member of this House expected to be subjected to laughter behind them when they try to speak to a resolution?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I understand we did have some problems and it is entirely possible that members are trying to reach some kind of agreement. I hope that they keep their voices down somewhat so we can listen to the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MRS. WESTBURY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's just a bit disconcerting when you hear gusts of laughter and you know you weren't being funny. I know that they are all on their way out but I appreciate your intervention, Mr. Speaker.

As I was saying, the complaints that do come to public attention, are those that arise, as a rule, from — we heard in the inner city last year where a woman had 21 or 22 children in one room that she was looking after on a family day care basis without adequate play space. They of course weren't licensed. The city in the end had to intervene in this case, but this is the sort of thing that happens. We know that there are also very good family day care places but nevertheless they should all be standardized and required to be licensed by the licencing authority. Actually what I am calling for here is supporting the recommendations of the United Way Community Day Care Study which include the requirement for a Day Care Act and the requirement for licensing for all of the day care centres throughout the province, whether they be day care centres or whether they be in a private home, a family operation.

The third Whereas refers to the fact that it is essential that heads of one parent families be permitted to enter the labour force and escape income poverty and of course, Mr. Speaker, a responsible single parent still feels this concern for the welfare of small children as those of us who have spouses helping to pay the bills and making it possible for one spouse to stay at home to look after the children. This is inserted as, I guess, a recognition of the fact that to many people, the economic factor is the only factor, and the only economic factor that they see is that dollar sign that is going on right now; they're not looking at the benefit in the future of adequate care for small children, but they are looking at the cost today or this year or next year. I understand that governments facing budgetary problems do have to do that.

I am suggesting that, and I think the Minister has acknowledged this himself in the past, in fact his emphasis has been towards, I think, enabling welfare parents and particularly mothers to return to work. That has to be one of the considerations.

I have knowledge of two instances that have come to me over the past few years, in particular, that I want to talk to members about. There was one

woman who lived in Fort Rouge who was a deserted mother and she phoned me on another problem concerning her six-year-old child who was in school. She was employed in a hospital, and she had had a babysitter come in to look after her three-year-old child every day. The babysitter's husband had been transferred to another city and so she was leaving. The woman had no way of finding another babysitter. As I said, this came out just in conversation, she was really desperate. She said, I'm afraid I'm going to have to give up my job and stay home with this three-year-old child and go on welfare. The government had been paying the cost of the babysitter. There was no way she could get her into one of the local day care centres, they were all full, and there was just no way of getting into them. In fact, her social worker at that time told her that the government wasn't able to help her at all, and yes, she would probably have to go on welfare. I suggest that for somebody like that, if they do go on to the welfare rolls for two, three, four years, there's a very good chance that they will be on them for life because they lose their courage, they lose their self-confidence. I'm afraid they just are not able to cope with going out and finding another job after the sort of attitudes that society has towards people that are on welfare unfortunately.

So that's one instance, and I happened to know at that time a senior member of the department, he's not with the department anymore, and I phoned him and said, what are you people trying to do, put these mothers on welfare? Why don't you make some provision for this child to be adequately cared for? Because this person was an understanding person, I wish he still was with the department, this woman was looked after and she continued to work at her job in a hospital.

There was another one, a woman who was deserted also, and when we talk about people alone we forget sometimes that they've already gone through the trauma of having one spouse walk out and leave them responsible for a family, and the fears and conflicts that must be going on in this individual's life and the emotional upheaval. This particular woman was a registered nurse and the only job she could get at that time was the 12:00 o'clock shift, the midnight shift, but she couldn't get anyone to look after her children, so she wouldn't take the job between 12:00 and 8:00. She could get someone to look after her children during the day, but not after midnight. So she went onto welfare and she has been on welfare ever since. So it is possible, Mr. Speaker, for responsible parents who are unable to get adequate care for their children to stay on the welfare rolls, to go onto welfare and just never to get off again, because being on welfare does not contribute to one's pride and confidence in oneself I'm afraid.

I wish we had a better system, I wish it was possible that we could enable people who are on the welfare rolls to become independent, more contented, more proud of what and who they are. That's not the way it is.

I am saying that part of this 4 million which the government has allocated to day care without telling us how it's going to be spent or where it's going to be spent or what the terms and conditions are going to be for the spending of it, but merely saying that

they will respond to people coming to them with proposals, so it's an unrealistic situation. They had something like 2 million, less than that I believe, 2.1 million in their budget for this year, and they're adding 4 million for the last three months of the year, and they're trying to convince us that that money will be spent.

Mr. Speaker, I have referred to the unlicensed centres and the detriment of the children in their care. I want to refer also to the fact that some of these babysitters that come in are not necessarily the best people to be bringing up these small children, or to be the major influence in their lives in their formative years. I've heard stories, perhaps you have too, Mr. Speaker, of babysitters who hit the bottle during the day and babysitters who didn't put the children out to play, or who went down to the store while the children were sleeping, having their nap in the afternoon. They're not necessarily the best people to look after the children.

The one major study that has been done is the study that was initiated and supported by the United Way. It's an excellent study, it has excellent recommendations. What I'm asking here is that the government give consideration to adopting a policy of supporting the recommendations.

I went, a couple of months ago, to a meeting about day care. The Honourable Member for Elmwood was there as well. When we were invited, we were told that the Minister was expected. The Minister didn't go and neither did any other member of his party. The Minister said he'd only just received the request a week before and he was busy, and one accepts that. One would hope that for something that comes under the scope of his department that he would have sent a replacement.

One of the mothers phoned her own MLA who was the Member for River Heights, and asked if he would attend, and the Member for River Heights was quoted as saying, no, I agree with the Minister when he says that there's nothing that can be done and that we shouldn't attend this meeting. That was very disappointing to me and to the Member for Elmwood, and of course to the many, many people who were out, and the fact that the Minister didn't go to that meeting led to the demonstration a couple of weeks later that we observed out in front of this building. In fact, I think that and other pressures led to the Minister's announcements of this mythical, this unspendable, it seems, 4 million, which is in the budget.

I believe that 4 million was a direct response to the panic that had been generated in the government by the demonstrators and by those many, many people who are saying to the government, we need adequate care for our children. Unfortunately, they didn't come forward with concrete proposals as to what they would do with the 4 million. We have yet to see the spending of that money, or to see any indication that concrete proposals are going to be submitted.

I would think with this government's concern for dollars, which seems to be paramount in their thinking, Mr. Speaker, that they would be looking at future costs to society of the children who have not had adequate care in their early childhood. It's common knowledge that a lot of those who have later problems have suffered from this neglect, or

from neglect, and I'm surprised that this government that says it expects to be in office for sometime isn't looking down the road a little way, instead of just looking at today and today's costs.

I know that the government is going to respond to this, and in their responding I hope that — I suppose, I'm afraid they will just talk it out — but in their responding I hope that they will refer actually to the sections of the United Way day care study and those proposals which are harmless enough, which will only do good, which will only contribute in a positive way to the care for children. I heard somebody say not very long ago that it's very hard to get money for children through Cabinets, because children don't vote, but their parents vote, Mr. Speaker, and there are a lot of us who do vote who really care about the care of young children, and I believe some of the people on that side also care about young children, they're perhaps not aware of the best way to handle this. I suggest that the best way would be to adopt the recommendations of the United Way, which is an organization that — it's not exactly an organization of galloping socialists — I suggest that if they were to accept those recommendations, that they would find it to their advantage both economically and socially.

Mr. Speaker, I would hope that those who are going to respond have read the United Way reports. I would expect them, in responding, to refer to the recommendations of the report.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Crescentwood.

MR. WARREN STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is my intention, as the Member for Fort Rouge said, to speak to this resolution of hers, and it's also my intention, at the conclusion of my remarks, to make an amendment to the honourable member's resolution.

The Member for Fort Rouge was referring to, at the conclusion of her remarks, the United Way study that was undertaken back in 1977, and the United Way at that time commissioned a study of day care and the total subject of day care as a result of a number of requests that they had from day care centres here in the greater Winnipeg area. The terms of reference of their study was to review the status of day care in Winnipeg and make recommendations on day care standards and funding. The United Way endorsed the recommendations after they received their study, and said that they generally believed that those who can afford the full costs of a service should pay those costs and that subsidies from government, in relation to day care facilities, should go to those who cannot afford to pay for day care services.

So this study was done, as I said, back in 1977, and has been made available for those that are interested in seeing the study and the government is very much aware of the study and its content and its recommendations, and as the Member for Fort Rouge said that she hoped that if someone from the government's side did speak and respond to her resolution, that they would touch on some of the subjects that were contained within the day care centre report done by the United Way.

There are a number of areas, Mr. Speaker, in relation to the report, that are contained in it referring to legislation, licencing and standards, funding, special needs and family day care, and some of the goals that the United Way have as a result of their study, and I would like to touch on each of these and then respond to the honourable member's resolution. Then at the conclusion of my remarks move an amendment to the honourable member's resolution.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

MR. FOX: Mr. Speaker, as a member of this House, I would ask whether it's acceptable to all members that we adjourn the House at this time and have the Honourable Member for Crescentwood speak at another time.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair is always amenable.

MR. FOX: In that case, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Brandon East, the House do now adjourn.

MOTION presented and carried and according to Rule No. 4, the House adjourned and according to the previous order of the House, remains adjourned until 10:00 tomorrow morning. (Saturday)