

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, March 14, 1979

Time: 2:30 p.m.

**OPENING PRAYER** by Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER, Hon. Harry E. Graham (Birtle-Russell):** Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . . Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees . . . Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports . . . Notices of Motion . . . Introduction of Bills.

## NON-POLITICAL STATEMENT

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Tourism.

**HON. NORMA L. PRICE (Assiniboia):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a non-political statement.

**MR. SAUL CHERNIACK (St. Johns):** I assume that this statement would not count as part of the Question Period, since you've already called for Questions. Could we agree that you set aside the Question Period until after the statement.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Very well. The Honourable Minister of Tourism.

**MRS. PRICE:** Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to announce that we have just received word of a singular honour being accorded a well-known musical group in Manitoba. The Treble Teens of Steinbach, who are from the constituency of the Member for La Verendrye, directed by Shirley Penner and Marni Loewen, have been selected from among thousands of contestants to represent Canada at the World Youth Festival in Vienna this coming August. This is a very special International Year of the Child project, and the group will participate in the official opening of the new United Nations building in Vienna. I know all honourable members will join me in extending warmest congratulations to the Treble Teens, who will bring honour to our province.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

**MR. CHERNIACK:** Mr. Speaker, may I just, on behalf of our group from this side, indeed join the Minister of Tourism in the congratulations that she has extended to the group. I think many of us have had the the opportunity and the pleasure to hear them perform, and they will certainly do credit to our province.

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

**MR. LAURENT L. DESJARDINS:** Mr. Speaker, this is a point of order in the question of procedure. I wonder if you could indicate what kind of Question Period this will be. Will it be freewheeling today, or will we try to listen to Beauchesne? We'd like to accommodate you, Mr. Speaker, if you would indicate . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** Before I make any comment on the point of order, I think we should proceed with the Question Period and we'll find out.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

**MR. CHERNIACK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address a question to the Minister of Education and inquire from him whether he or any person in his department participated in the decision that was made to . increase tuition fees at the universities and particularly the University

of Winnipeg.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Education.

**HON. KEITH A. COSENS (Gimli):** No, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. CHERNIACK:** As a supplementary, Mr. Speaker, are we to assume that the report that appeared in March 9th of 1979 to the effect that the Grants Commission gave a special grant to the University of Winnipeg on condition that they must increase tuition fees was one in which this Minister and his government had no role?

**MR. COSENS:** There was no direction from my department, Mr. Speaker, in that regard.

**MR. CHERNIACK:** Well, Mr. Speaker, in light of the fact that the previous government did have stipulations to prevent the increase of tuition fees, would the Minister indicate whether he is prepared to develop the policy which would have a direct concern about increasing costs to students at the universities?

**MR. COSENS:** We're always concerned about increasing costs, not only to students but in the operation of the universities themselves.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

**MR. HARVEY BOSTROM:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the same Minister and is with respect to the university funding as well. Can he confirm that his department has cut back funds to the University of Brandon and other universities, to the extent that the Native Education Programs, particularly those relating to the training of native teachers, have been cut back by 20 percent? Mr. Speaker, this is being done at a time when there is a very great need for teachers in northern Manitoba.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Education.

**MR. COSENS:** Mr. Speaker, I can certainly confirm that the allocation to the universities this year from the government was some 6 percent, which, in relation to the type of allocation that I'm seeing across the country, seems to compare quite favourably. I believe Nova Scotia was 5.5 percent, Ontario some 4.5, and B.C. some 5 percent.

In regard to the particular programs that he refers to, there has been some diminution in the size of the enrolment in some of these particular programs. I am quite prepared to go into the details of that when I get into my Estimates.

**MR. BOSTROM:** Mr. Speaker, just by way of information, can the Minister confirm that these programs had pending applications from 174 people, which could not be accommodated, before these cuts were made?

**MR. COSENS:** At this point, Mr. Speaker, I couldn't confirm the number of applications. Certainly there is always a waiting list in a number of communities in this regard. I can mention to the honourable member that we have just recently opened a new training program at Fairford in regard to one of these programs that will be taking in additional students.

**MR. BOSTROM:** Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary to this Minister. Can he confirm that as a result of his cutbacks there is one program that has been cut out completely, and that is the program dealing with the education of people learning English as a second language, that this program has been cut out completely as a result of this government's cutbacks?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please. May I suggest to the honourable member that the Question Period is to elicit information, not to make statements. The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

**MR. BOSTROM:** Well, Mr. Speaker, perhaps I could rephrase the question so that the Minister could answer it if he so desires.

With respect to the program which provided education to students learning English as a second language, can the Minister confirm that the cutbacks by the Progressive Conservative Government has resulted in this program being cut out completely in the schools of Manitoba?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Education.

**MR. COSENS:** I certainly will not confirm that, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

**MR. LLOYD AXWORTHY:** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Education. In view of the present concern that's being expressed by the School Superintendents and Trustees about safety of school buses, would the Minister confirm to the House that the only provincial requirement presently in existence for the driver of the school buses is that they have a Class 2 licence, which means they only have to be 18 years of age and provide a medical certificate. Is that the only requirement that the province now imposes upon those who drive school buses?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Education.

**MR. COSENS:** There are certain requirements, of course, Mr. Speaker, that school bus drivers must meet besides those particular licence requirements. They are tested periodically to make sure that they are meeting those particular requirements as well.

**MR. AXWORTHY:** Mr. Speaker, I would be very interested if the Minister might tell us exactly what those requirements are in view of a report that has been released studying the problem of school bus safety in six provinces, including Manitoba, which indicate that over 50 percent of the accidents are caused or due to errors by bus drivers and which recommends that the high incidence of bus driver error indicates the need for a more discriminating selection.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order. Order please. Has the honourable member a question for the Minister?

**MR. AXWORTHY:** Mr. Speaker, I have a question. Could the Minister indicate, has the Department of Education received this report indicating that the substantial problem of accidents dealing with school buses is due to driver error, and that these provinces do not have adequate selection of school bus drivers, training programs, or any kind of requirements, and does he intend now to take some action to correct those obvious errors of omission dealing with our school bus system?

**MR. COSENS:** Mr. Speaker, I'm not at all surprised to hear the honourable member mention that human error is one of the prime causes in these accidents as in many vehicle accidents in this province and I can assure him that the matter of school bus safety is one that weighs quite heavily on my mind and is one that I've asked my department to study and study thoroughly and I will be proceeding, I would hope, in the near future with certain changes in that regard.

**MR. AXWORTHY:** Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to learn of the Minister's concern. I would also like to ask him though what action he intends to take in light of this particular study that has now been released already documenting the problems, and can he tell us whether his department is prepared to introduce stricter standards for the selection of bus drivers as well, and perhaps more importantly, a provincial standard of training and education for bus drivers before they're given licences to drive those buses?

**MR. COSENS:** Mr. Speaker, if our present study of this matter indicates and confirms what the Member for Fort Rouge is saying, certainly we will consider different specifications and different requirements. I say if our study indicates that the situation exists in this province as he suggests exists in other provinces in this country.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

**MR. LEONARD S. EVANS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the absence of the First Minister I suppose I should address this question to the Minister of Finance. I wonder if the Minister of Finance could advise the House what the position of the Manitoba Government is with respect to supporting the continuation of the Crows Nest Pass Rate Agreement which, as the Honourable Minister knows, the railways would like to see abolished thereby increasing the costs to our farmers.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Finance.

**HON. DONALD W. CRAIK (Riel):** Well, Mr. Speaker, I know that the First Minister did deal with that same question in the House here not too long ago, but in case it wasn't exactly the same question I'll take it as notice and pass it on to the First Minister.

**MR. EVANS:** I wonder while the Honourable Minister is taking that as notice if he would take also as notice a question with respect to providing some meaningful guarantee so that the Crow rate will be maintained, my question then specifically is, is the Government of Manitoba prepared to follow the lead of the Government of Saskatchewan which has now announced a \$3 million subsidy program known as the Crow Rate Guarantee Plan?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please. The Honourable Minister of Finance. I thought the member had finished this question.

**MR. EVANS:** Yes, I will repeat the question, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Honourable Minister would take as notice this question. Is the Government of Manitoba prepared to follow the lead of the Government of Saskatchewan, which has very recently announced a \$3 million subsidy program known as the Crow Rate Guarantee Plan, to be implemented in conjunction with the Federal Government in order to ensure the maintenance of the Crowsnest Pass rate agreement for grain shipments out of the Prairies?

**MR. CRAIK:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I notice that the Province of Saskatchewan has just posted a \$60 million profit out of its Heritage Fund, which is following the pattern of Alberta as well, and have shown for the second year a \$60 million surplus. I would certainly like to have that to work with before undertaking what the member is suggesting, but I'll take that part of his question as notice as well.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

**MR. RUSSELL DOERN:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Education. In view of the announced budget cut by the City of Winnipeg, the Winnipeg School Division, that they are eliminating their summer educational program for underprivileged children, in view of inadequate provincial funding I wonder whether the Minister would have the ability to react by either providing a new program or special funding to pick up the slack for inner city children.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Education.

**MR. COSENS:** Mr. Speaker, we're quite prepared to look at any proposals that may be placed before us in regard to particular programs. We haven't had any proposals in that regard in relation to the situation that the honourable member mentions. We haven't received any proposals to this point.

**MR. DOERN:** Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to direct a question to the Minister of Health based on my previous question, namely, that the school trustees indicated that in their judgment some of these special programs for inner city youths should be provided by the Province, and since we will now have neither an educational program for underprivileged children nor will they have any summer camp program, which this was in part a substitution for, is there any way that the Minister can assist the City of Winnipeg and the inner core children by providing some summer camp program or activity?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Health.

**HON. L.R. (Bud) SHERMAN (Fort Garry):** Well, Mr. Speaker, I'd be very reluctant to raise false hopes or expectations but I will assure my honourable friend that my department and my office certainly stand ready to talk and to explore and I'd be prepared to do that. But, I don't want to leave the impression that there's anything in our budget for 1979-80 that is not committed as will be revealed when we get into my Estimates in a few minutes.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

**MR. DOERN:** Mr. Speaker, I then ask the Minister whether he refutes or challenges the view

by a number of Winnipeg school trustees that in fact it was a provincial responsibility and that the province should in fact step into the breach.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Health.

**MR. SHERMAN:** I haven't seen or heard that statement other than as reported by the Honourable Member for Elmwood, Mr. Speaker. I would at this juncture, reject that allegation.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Churchill.

**MR. JAY COWAN:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Acting Minister of Labour. Can the Minister confirm that the Advisory Counsel of the Workplace Safety and Health Division is scheduled to meet this Friday, March 16th at 10:00 o'clock a.m. at the Norquay Building?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Tourism.

**MRS. PRICE:** Mr. Speaker, I'll have to take the question as notice.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Churchill.

**MR. COWAN:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. While the Minister is taking that question as notice, can she undertake to confirm that the agenda at that meeting will include a discussion of the very serious lead poisoning crisis that currently exists in the province?

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

**MR. COWAN:** Yes, a final supplementary to the Minister, Mr. Speaker. In light of the public disclosure of correspondence from the Canadian Association of Industrial Mechanical and Allied Workers and the International Molders and Allied Workers to the Minister of Labour that substantiates earlier allegations that the Minister's so-called lead control . . . (—Interjection—)

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please. Orders of the Day. The Honourable Member for Churchill care to ask a question?

**MR. COWAN:** Yes. Perhaps I can rephrase the question, Mr. Speaker. In light of those correspondence being publicly disclosed today, can the Minister indicate to the House which unions the Minister of Labour was talking about when he said that he has unanimous approval of his so-called lead control program?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Acting Minister of Labour.

**MRS. PRICE:** I think, Mr. Speaker, that I'll have to take it as notice, or else you could hold it until the Minister comes back.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Transcona.

**MR. PARASIUK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Consumer Affairs. Some three weeks ago the Minister agreed to find out how much in the way of rent rebates, which the Rent Review Board had ruled is owed to tenants, is presently tied up in the courts by Edison Realty? Is the Minister able to inform us how much is involved?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister.

**MR. JORGENSON:** Mr. Speaker, I'm sorry. I don't have that information for my honourable friend yet.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Transcona.

**MR. PARASIUK:** Supplementary to the Minister, since the court delay is of benefit to the landlord, Edison Realty, and not to the tenants has the Minister checked into why the Rent Review Board is not actively trying to get the court case heard as quickly as possible?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Consumer Affairs.

**MR. JORGENSEN:** In response to my honourable friend, I should advise him that the Rent Review Board is actively attempting to get the case heard as early as possible.

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

**MR. PARASIUK:** Yes, as a supplementary to the Minister, will the Minister try to get his Board to instruct the lawyer to proceed with the case so that the tenants can get the money which the Rent Review Board itself said is owed to the tenants some 17 months ago?

**MR. JORGENSEN:** Mr. Speaker, I can only repeat to my honourable friend what I've already told him. We'll do our best to attempt to settle this matter at the earliest possible moment.

**MR. JENKINS:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Acting Minister of Labour. Can she inform the House when we can expect to have the Minister of Labour back in the house?

**MRS. PRICE:** Hopefully in about a week, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. JENKINS:** My second question, Mr. Speaker, is to the Minister of Education. The Minister of Education announced this afternoon that the province's increase in share of funding to the universities is approximately 6 per cent. Last year, it was approximately 2.9, but the Minister during the discussion of his Estimates claimed that the increase in fees . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please. Has the honourable member a question to ask?

**MR. JENKINS:** Yes, I do have a question, Mr. Speaker, and I do need a bit of preliminary so that the honourable minister understands the question that I'm going to ask him. Last year, the minister insisted in his estimates that the increase in fees made a provincial contribution of 5.1 per cent. I want to know what percentage he's calculating this year in the proposed 6 per cent since there is a proposed increase in fees to the students of the universities of Manitoba?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please. I have to say that the honourable member's question is argumentative and I have to rule it out of order. Does the honourable member care to ask another question?

**MR. JENKINS:** Well, Mr. Chairman, if you would take this under advisement, I don't see what part of my question was argumentative. I was just stating what the honourable minister had stated last year during his Estimate. If that is argumentative, then I guess the whole process of what we are proceeding here with in the Question Period will be argumentative.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please. Does the honourable member want to ask another question?

**MR. JENKINS:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. I just want to ask the minister what percentage of the 6 per cent is his increase to the proposed 6 per cent for this year.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Education.

**MR. COSENS:** Mr. Speaker, the 6 per cent allocation to the universities does not include any tuition increase.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

**MR. AXWORTHY:** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Health and Social Development. As a consequence of the 50 per cent or better cut in the Work Activity Program can the minister indicate whether the government intends to close down the Pioneer Restaurant presently being operated by the Work Activities group in the Senior Citizens Home at 185 Smith Street?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Health.

**MR. SHERMAN:** First of all, Mr. Speaker it was not a 50 per cent cut, it's approximately a 33-1/3 per cent cut. I think that point should be made. Well, that's a considerable exaggeration, I

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, the Pioneer Restaurant and Pioneer Services Program is not being affected, as far as I know, it has been taken under the operating responsibility of my colleague, the minister responsible for the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation.

**MR. AXWORTHY:** Mr. Speaker, if the responsibility for the restaurant has been transferred, would the minister indicate that the people who are being trained in restaurant skills (trainees in the program) are no longer working there and is it now a commercial venture, or does it still have some component of job training and rehabilitation included as part of the restaurant program?

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Speaker, the honourable member would have to direct that question to the Minister responsible for Housing.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge with a final supplementary.

**MR. AXWORTHY:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I think that we now know what the Minister intends. I would like to ask a question of the Attorney-General in answer to a question yesterday concerning the Human Rights jurisdiction over the access route to the concourse at the corner of Portage and Main. The Minister indicated in his answer that because a number of access routes were to be built that he felt this was all right. The problem is that those access routes are not yet built and, at the same time, surface transit is not allowed on the top of Portage and Main. Under those circumstances would the Minister, under Section 19(1) which gives the Human Rights Commission the right to investigate its own cases and not wait for appeals, instruct the Human Rights Commission to initiate some action against the City in terms of a deprivation of human rights of those who have handicaps?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Attorney-General.

**HON. GERALD W.J. MERCIER (Osborne):** Mr. Speaker, I didn't indicate the fact that there was one entranceway for handicaps was all right; I indicated that this matter had been discussed very carefully by the architect with Mr. Tony Mann of the Canadian Paraplegic Association. Mr. Mann is a very well-respected member of this community in dealing with this particular kind of problem. I might mention also that the particular architect in question had a handicapped child and was very concerned about this particular problem.

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated yesterday, this matter was discussed at at least six meetings with representatives of the handicapped, and my information is that it was satisfactory to them at the time.

With respect to the specific question raised by the Member for Fort Rouge, there are a number of alternatives. Any individual may file a complaint with the Human Rights Commission, including the Member for Fort Rouge or the Minister, or the Manitoba Human Rights Commission itself may initiate an inquiry. Those are alternatives that are before us that could be followed.

**MR. AXWORTHY:** Mr. Speaker, as a supplementary to that answer, while I respect that discussions took place, the fact is that the commitments made to what was being built have not been fulfilled. Now the question is, will the Minister initiate — as he has a full right to do under the Human Rights Act — the Human Rights Commission to investigate this problem to determine whether there has been a deprivation of rights, simply because those commitments and those discussions have not been upheld?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please, order please. May I suggest to the honourable member his question is repetitive. The Honourable Member for Flin Flon.

**MR. THOMAS BARROW:** I direct my question to the Minister of Mines, Mr. Speaker. Has the Minister received a letter from the steelworkers concerning a dangerous lead spill in one of the Flin Flon plants?

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

**HON. BRIAN RANSOM (Souris-Killarney):** No, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. BARROW:** When the Minister receives such a letter —(Interjection)— or when you get around to reading it —(Interjection)— will the Minister investigate the cause and effects of such a serious accident?

**MR. RANSOM:** Mr. Speaker, I will have to await the arrival of the letter and determine the contents. We'll follow it up.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Flin Flon with a final supplementary.

**MR. BARROW:** Mr. Speaker, I will guarantee he will get the letter. And when the Minister gets the letter and reads the letter, would he determine whether the accident happened in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, or is it a federal problem?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please. May I suggest to the honourable member that his question is anticipatory. The Honourable Member for The Pas.

**MR. RONALD McBRYDE:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address a question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. A week ago Monday I addressed a number of questions to the Minister that related to serious problems being caused to the tenants at a trailer park in The Pas because of a dispute between two other parties, and the Minister yesterday gave an answer to one of the questions. I wonder if the Minister will be answering the rest of those questions — or should I repeat them?

Mr. Speaker, the question then to the Minister of Municipal Affairs is whether or not the government is going to bring in any legislation this session which will change the legislation so that the tenants who are not involved in the dispute will not be affected by the Municipal Act. It appears that when it was designed it was not designed for a trailer court situation but for an individual situation.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Attorney-General.

**MR. MERCIER:** Mr. Speaker, before any such legislation is introduced, I think it would be very appropriate that it be referred to the municipality involved who, in this particular case, have lost revenue of \$33,000.00.

**MR. McBRYDE:** Mr. Speaker, the other part of the question was: What will happen to a tenant who has already paid his taxes through his rent, if that tenant attempts to move his trailer or sell his trailer from this particular trailer park? And, Mr. Speaker, I would also like to ask the Minister whether he would be willing to have himself or a senior member from the Municipal Affairs Department travel to the The Pas and meet with the tenants in this situation, because the tenants are very confused, concerned and upset about what they should be doing at this time — whether he could have someone from his department go there and clarify the situation for them?

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Burrows.

**MR. BEN HANUSCHAK:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. I wish to address my question to the Honourable Minister of Finance. It relates to a publication which all of us had received, published by the Tourist and Conventions' Association in Manitoba, which describes itself as the voice of the private sector and which is heavily subsidized out of the public purse. Could the Minister indicate what other voices in the private sector chorus are subsidized out of the public purse?

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

**MR. BILLIE URUSKI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture and ask him, in light of the non-policy of his government, as indicated by the Minister of Mines yesterday with respect to the sale of Crown lands, could the Minister indicate and tell us on what basis is he sending out his ag reps and telling people that Crown land will be sold, when the government, at this point in time, has no policy?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

**HON. JAMES E. DOWNEY (Arthur):** Mr. Speaker, I am unaware of any directive that has been given to the ag reps in this regard.

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Speaker, the Minister might ask his people whether they are telling the farmers that the lands will be for sale. Mr. Speaker, is the Minister of Agriculture prepared to take the lead in this area and prepare a policy and present it to this Legislature, unlike his colleague, the Minister of Mines?

**MR. DOWNEY:** As has been stated in the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, we are considering it, and when it is a policy of our government he will be one of the first to know, as the rest of the members of this Legislative Assembly.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Transcona.

**MR. PARASIUK:** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Consumer Affairs. Has the staff at the Rent Review Board been tabulating figures on the number of apartment suites that have been decontrolled under the provisions of the amended Rent Stabilization Act since the amendments came into force?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Consumer Affairs.

**MR. JORGENSON:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, they have. I don't have those figures with me but if my honourable friend wants them I will see to it that he gets them.

**MR. PARASIUK:** I thank the Minister for his response. Since he will be providing those figures, I'd like to ask him if the Minister could also endeavour to tell us what the average rent increases have been for suites decontrolled either because they were voluntarily vacated, or commanded rents over \$400, or existed outside of the City of Winnipeg when the Act came into force?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Consumer Affairs.

**MR. JORGENSON:** Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure that that information is available. I'll make some inquiries and find out.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

**MR. PETER FOX:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health and Community Services. I'd like to know when I could get a reply to a letter which was directed to him by his special assistant, J. R. Burns, on February 6th. It deals with a serious problem one of my constituents has with respect to an operation he's desiring. I also spoke to the Minister on that personally.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Health.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that my honourable friend has had an acknowledgment of his letter and he is aware that we are investigating the problem he has brought to my attention.

**MR. FOX:** That was precisely my question, Mr. Speaker. I am aware that I have an acknowledgment, but I'd like to know when I'm going to get a reply. The Minister received the question on February 6th and I still haven't been assured that I will get a reply.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Speaker, the honourable member can be assured that he will get a reply as soon as I have one to give him. I can give him an interim reply which will amount to a non-reply. I'll endeavour to expedite the kind of answer he wants, either yes or no, as quickly as possible.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

**MR. BOSTROM:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Highways in his capacity as being the Minister responsible for winter roads. I wonder if the Minister has been able to determine yet if he could have his department maintain the roads open until such time as all of the supplies have reached their destinations, or at least to allow the supplies to be continued, freighted into these communities as long as weather permits.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of High ways.

**HON. HARRY J. ENNS (Lakeside):** Mr. Speaker, I indicated to the Honourable Member for Rupertsland when last we were in committee that the department is prepared, particularly where they are aware of some specific freight shipments yet to be made to the north, to extend or to assist in the movement of that freight by whatever means possible. We are not aware of any great number of these requests. The honourable member indicated one particular shipment of building materials for a housing project, I have asked the department to check that matter and if that freight can, in fact be moved in the next day or two, it shall be moved.

**MR. BOSTROM:** Mr. Speaker, just by way of information for the Minister, the Department of Medical Services for the federal government still has supplies which must be shipped to the communities on the east side of Lake Winnipeg, so I wonder if the Minister could investigate that and ensure that the roads are open to Island Lake and Little Grand Rapids and Berens River to ensure that those supplies can reach their destination.

**MR. ENNS:** Mr. Speaker, this Minister can do many things, but I can't assure the honourable member that if, indeed spring should come this weekend as they're forecasting, tomorrow, or Friday, that those roads will not deteriorate very rapidly. And in that event, of course, the winter roads program is no longer operable.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Rupertsland with a final question.

**MR. BOSTROM:** Mr. Speaker, what I'm asking the Minister to do, and I ask him specifically if he will ensure that these roads are graded this week, so that weather permitting, the transportation of necessary supplies can continue as long as the roads stay in their frozen condition. The problem is, Mr. Speaker, that some of the roads I believe are blocked now by the recent snowfall and recent blizzards that we've had.

**MR. ENNS:** Mr. Speaker, I have instructed the department that where they receive a specific request for assistance in moving some of the last shipments of freight over these roads to northern localities, that this assistance be provided.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Burrows.

**MR. HANUSCHAK:** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Tourism. Could the Minister indicate to the House whether the Tourist and Convention Association of Manitoba, the voice of the private sector, will be continued to be supported by the taxpayers of the province of Manitoba for the forthcoming fiscal year?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please. The question is repetitive. The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

**MR. DOERN:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Health. Since the Attorney-General has expressed the view that he would favour stiffer sentences due to a laxness in the temporary absence program, I'd like to ask the Minister whether he might resolve this issue by issuing a directive that this type of a release should be given under more stringent conditions?

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Speaker, all I can say is what I said to my honourable friend yesterday, that we have reorganized the Corrections component, the Corrections Service in government, I would assume that that move speaks for itself.

**MR. DOERN:** Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister, in view of the fact that the two Ministers and their respective departments are supporting contradictory policies, would he make an attempt to have a meeting with the Attorney-General to resolve their differences?

**MR. SHERMAN:** I'm always delighted to meet with the Attorney-General, Mr. Speaker, and the one thing I find in meeting after meeting with him is that we have no internal differences.

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

**MR. DOERN:** Mr. Speaker, I would also ask the Minister whether he could indicate whether his

department intends to proceed with an expansion of Headingley Gaol in terms of the holding space because of severe overcrowding, which apparently is also resulting in a revolving door policy. Does he have any plans to construct additional holding space there?

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Speaker, we don't have any plans to construct additional holding space there, but as the honourable member well knows, there is a new correctional institution nearing completion in the western part of this province, and we intend to utilize every square inch of it.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

**MR. EVANS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address a question to the Minister of Finance. With respect to the unemployment situation in the province, it has been reported as of yesterday by Statistics Canada, that the young people of this province, namely those in the age bracket between 16 and 24 years of age, have an unemployment rate of 13.6 percent, which is approximately double that for all Manitobans of 7 percent, would the government, in light of this serious unemployment situation among the young people, consider taking some special initiatives at this time to provide jobs for the youth of this province.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Finance.

**MR. CRAIK:** Mr. Speaker, I think that we dealt with these questions at great length yesterday, and I think that they were adequately dealt with at that time. I do want to point out that the statistics that have been reported from the StatsCanada information is that in general, the female group in that age bracket have improved somewhat and substantially, and that there is some problem still, obviously, with the male group in that age bracket. However, also reported yesterday, and is still being reported, I gather, on the radio this morning as I came to work, that the opportunities for youth right now are very substantial—lly better for both male and female than they have been in quite some time.

But in addition to that, we do intend to go ahead with the program that has been indicated, where last year we were able to assist in the establishment of some 5,000 jobs, and that is intended to be proceeded with.

**MR. EVANS:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the fact that the government has a special job creation program particularly designed for students, people who are in our educational institutions and around the labour market or in the labour market during the summer months. What I'm asking the Honourable Minister is whether the government would consider taking special initiatives for those young people who are not in an educational institution. At the present time the figures relate to the month of February. These people are not in educational institutions, will not necessarily be taking advantage of this particular program. So, my question is, would the Minister consider taking special initiatives, something along the lines of the jobs in small business program which the previous government had implemented and which was available for others than those in the educational institutions?

**MR. CRAIK:** Mr. Speaker, there are programs that are operating and, Mr. Speaker, I have to repeat that this very question was dealt with yesterday by the First Minister. The STEP program, the ICEP program, the Public Sector Youth Employment Program, to name but three of them, are in operation supported by the provincial government.

**MR. EVANS:** Well' Mr. Speaker, I would beg to differ with the Honourable Minister. My understanding is that —(Interjection)— Mr. Speaker, I will abide by your ruling, not by the interferences of the Minister of Highway. My question, I'm not sure whether the Honourable Minister understands, my question relates, and I do not believe this was answered yesterday, my question relates to the young people of Manitoba who are now experiencing an unemployment rate of 13.6 percent, who are not in the educational institutions and who will not necessarily be helped by the special Student Employment Program which has been talked about. So the question —(Interjection)—

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please. I believe the member's question is repetitive. The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

**MR. EVANS:** Mr. Speaker, if the question sounds repetitive, it's because I haven't received an answer. I would simply ask yes or no, Mr. Speaker. . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please. May I point out to the honourable member he has a perfect right to ask a question. He may expect an answer. He has not the right to demand an answer and repetition of questions does not improve the question period. The hour of questions having lapsed, we are now proceeding with the Orders of the Day.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

**MR. JORGENSON:** Mr. Speaker, will you call the bills in the order in which they appear -

### GOVERNMENT BILLS—ADJOURNED DEBATES ON SECOND READING BILL NO. 5—CRIMINAL INJURIES COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT

**MR. SPEAKER:** Adjourned debates on second reading, Bill No. 5. The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

**MR. PETER FOX:** Mr. Speaker, I adjourned this bill for my colleague, the Member for Wellington.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Wellington.

**MR. BRIAN CORRIN:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Act amendments that are proposed, I would indicate that, speaking as an individual, and I think reflecting the sentiment of my colleagues as well, we are generally at idem in consensus with the amendments, the revisions put forward in this regard. My honourable friend, the Member for St. Johns last week, spoke to the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, relative to the concerns he had regarding the amendment to Section 11(1). We were supportive of the amendment. It was what one might only describe as being of a very technical nature.

But in considering that section, and having regard to the nature of the factors that are put to the Board therein in order that they might direct their minds to what factors are relevant in considering the compensation to be made, either to an applicant or victim, I might say that the Member for St. Johns and myself were both concerned that there should be some scrutiny, some assessment now made by the Honourable Attorney-General as to the future necessity of continuing the proviso whereby the character of the applicant or the victim could be taken into consideration - by the Board. I was sufficiently concerned in this respect that I made a telephone call to the person who I believe is serving as board chairman. I asked him in his experience whether he could relate to me any hardships that had devolved from this provision. He indicated that there was one case some time ago where there was some concern about the havoc that that particular provision might have caused but there being no appeal, and the person apparently, the applicant being represented by a lawyer, the board members were of the opinion that it didn't create any havoc.

So not to make a mountain out of a mole hill, Mr. Speaker, I would indicate that I personally can't see the rationale for maintaining the provision whereby the character of the applicant or victim should be considered. I candidly though do have to express to members present that my own interrogations, my own investigations have not revealed any inequities, any injustices. But, I would suggest that it leaves the door open. It's a provision that may well in the future come to our attention in tragic circumstances. It's difficult to contemplate the circumstances.

I know that I hypothesized and one of the few that I could think of was rather sensational and that was a case perhaps of a sexual assault to a person such as a prostitute where the individual may have been the victim of a criminal assault where no consent was given and yet, because the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board could consider the character of the victim in that case and would be aware that it was more or less a question of commerce, usually a question of commerce whether she exercised her prerogative and gave favours in this respect. They could determine that she was not to be held a successful applicant before the board. So, I have this concern' Mr. Speaker. I would ask that the Attorney -General give it consideration, discuss perhaps the matter with the members of the board and legislative counsel and during the course of our review in Law Amendments, perhaps he could report to us on what opinions he received and whether or not any directions would be made, any revisions would be made in that respect. Thank you.

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

**MR. MERCIER:** Mr. Speaker, just very briefly of course both the Member for St. Johns and the Member for Wellington have indicated support in principle for the extension of the limitation period to applicants before the board but have, at the same time, expressed a concern with some of the detail of the bill relating to the character of the victim. I'm prepared to review the concerns that they have expressed and deal with this matter further in committee, Mr. Speaker. On that basis, I think we could proceed to pass second reading and deal with this matter further in committee.

**QUESTION put MOTION carried.**

**MR. SPEAKER:** Bill No. 8. The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

**MR. FOX:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. I adjourned this debate for the Honourable Member for Wellington.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for uellington.

**MR. CORRIN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, in dealing with this particular bill, I would indicate that, having examined the proposed amendments and revisions, there is no doubt that they play a useful part in making the legislation more consistent and more just. However, with respect again to probably what may prove to be a technical point but one I think that the Attorney-General would well seek advice respecting, I would ask if he would be so kind as to direct his attention and the attention of members of his department to the amendment proposed to Section 89(1) of the Act. This is a revision that deals with the administration of estates in this province of persons who are actually detained or held out-of-province.

I am concerned — and I must say that perhaps I am being too picayune — but I am concerned that the drafting of the amendment is such that it may open the door to considerably more than was originally contemplated. My presumption is that this was basically just an opportunity to revise the law in order that local authorities within our service could make arrangements with out-of-province trustees in order to have affairs handled expeditiously and efficiently. But my concern is that we are deleting the words, "who is detained in hospital or other public institution." To explain that a bit further, Mr. Speaker, I suppose I should indicate that the effect of that will be, in my opinion — and I suggest respectfully it is only at this point my opinion — to open the door and have orders respecting administration of estates, management and handling of estates, for out-of-province people that may well be inconsistent with our experience and with our management of estates in the province.

To be even more specific, I foresee as a result of this the possibility that a person who would not be declared to be mentally incompetent in this province and would therefore not be subject to having his estate administered by a trustee in this jurisdiction might, as a result of having been detained in another province, find him or herself in a position where a trustee could be appointed from this province to manage affairs while they are detained in that other province. You see, by removing the provision, "detained in hospital or other public institution", I fear that what you've done is you've left it subject to considerable latitude as to whose estate, whose affairs, may be taken in charge. Clearly, if a person is detained in hospital or in a public institution in another province, there would have to be an order made under the Mental Health Act or some equivalent legislation in that jurisdiction, but with respect to a person who was simply deemed to be mentally disordered I'm not sure that there would have to be any declaration of incompetency actually made.

I hope I'm not being too obtuse. I'm trying to make the point so that my honourable friend, the Attorney-General, can seek counsel and advice. I certainly don't think that was contemplated when the wording was actually arrived at. I might also add, and speaking generally to the provisions of the Mental Health Act, that I wish once again to express my concern about the absence of a proper reporting process respecting cases involving death of residents held in our Mental Institutions.

I was particularly aggrieved, Mr. Speaker, to hear of the death of a resident, a Mr. Malcolm Chenier, in January at the Portage Home for Retardates and, having made certain inquiries, I established to my satisfaction that presently there is no reporting mechanism in either the Mental Health Act or any other piece of legislation in our province that guarantees publication of the name of a person who does die by misadventure whilst resident in an institution. Now, I know that we

can suggest that that's an academic concern. I know that members present might say, "Well, there's no reason to withhold the name of an individual who may die in those circumstances." Normally Coroners' Reports are made. In the Fatal Accident Inquiries Act of this province there is provision for the Provincial Coroner or the Medical Health Officer to make an investigation of deaths in those circumstances, but there's no provision — and I confirmed this with Dr. Parker who is the incumbent in that particular position now — there is no provision whereby the death must be published, before this House or anywhere else, and there really is no provision whereby the death of a person by accident in those circumstances has to be made the subject of a proper inquest, and that is a concern.

That to me, Mr. Speaker, is a matter of considerable concern because it seems to me that, in all fairness, people who are detained against their will, people such as the unfortunate residents at the Portage Home who are detained against their will by the State should, and of course their next-of-kin, their parents and guardians, should be assured that if any mishap should occur by misadventure or accident that there will be a thorough public evaluation of causes. And although it would be, I think, extraordinary and out of context for me to suggest that the present state of affairs may not lead us in the best direction, I would suggest that we should want to know and we should be willing to share our information relative to these sorts of situations with the public.

So I would ask, Mr. Speaker, again that, I suppose both the Honourable Attorney-General and the Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, take into consideration my concerns.

I would indicate that presently I'm considering the presentation of a Private Member's bill. I would frankly prefer that such a bill go forward with unanimous consent and I would indicate at this time that I am quite willing to reciprocate in whatever manner may be necessary in order to afford the government side and the Honourable Ministers the opportunity to present such legislation, which could be adopted, as it were, by consensus and unanimously.

For your further information, Mr. Speaker, I've taken the liberty and the pains to consider the form in which such a piece of draft legislation, a bill might take, and in that respect I've discussed the matter at some length with legislative counsel. I do have a proposed bill, which meets with legislative counsel's acceptance. I have divulged the contents of that bill to members, of course on my side. We, at present, have endorsed it; we have given consideration to it and agree that we will put it forward, but as I said it's not the sort of thing that need go forward on an adversarial basis. It I think bespeaks common sense that there are certain things that should be capable of being arrived at by way of consensus.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please. May I suggest to the Honourable Member that he may be straying somewhat from the context of this bill.

**MR. CORRIN:** Well, with respect to that point of order or that direction, Mr. Speaker, I would indicate that I searched the provisions of the Mental Health Act, this being second reading of the bill dealing with amendment to the Mental Health Act, and unfortunately, regrettably, could find no provision that bespeaks my concern. Having found no provision in dealing with amendments and revisions to the Mental Health Act, I thought that this was the suitable opportunity, the appropriate time, to bring my concern forward to yourself and the Honourable Minister.

I would indicate in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, that I will share the contents of the draft bill with the two government members. I'd be willing, for that matter, to discuss it with any member who's similarly concerned, and hopefully with some consensus and some joint participation and effort on our parts we'll be able to present, through this Assembly to you, Mr. Speaker, a suitable amendment in this regard.

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

**MR. MERCIER:** Mr. Speaker, the Member for Wellington has indicated the concern with respect to the bill before us may be one just of drafting and in view of that I'm certainly prepared to indicate we will review the concerns of the Member for Wellington with legislative counsel at Law Amendments Committee, and if any clarification is required, we're certainly prepared to do that.

With the second part of the comments of the Member for Wellington, I would be most pleased if he would provide me with a copy of the proposed amendment that he has referred to so that we have an opportunity to review it, and consider whether or not it would perhaps be an appropriate amendment to include at Law Amendments Committee.

**QUESTION put, MOTION carried.**

**MR. SPEAKER:** Bill No. 9. The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

**MR. FOX:** Will you have this matter stand, Mr. Speaker, and 12 as well, 13 as well, and we'll proceed on 15.

**BILL NO. 15 — GARNISHMENT ACT AMENDMENT**

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

**MR. FOX:** I had not intended to speak on this, I was really holding it for my colleague, but the other day when the honourable member for St. Johns was speaking, he indicated that the relationship in respect to the Garnishment Act was tied in through the words of the Attorney-General to the minimum wage. I can see him squirming in his seat, and well he should because you see, I believe that there should be fairness in all things when we proceed when we are amending legislation which has become dated, but there are also other areas where we have to do exactly the same thing. And if he is tying it to the minimum wage, he should have a little compassion and consider the people, who are trying to exist at that level. Not only that, but those people, probably more than others, will be the ones who'll be served with garnishment orders, and they will be in real dire straits if you're going to take away almost all that they earn. So there was more than one reason why the Treasury Bench, if they are the ones who are making the decision, because the Minister of Labour has indicated that he will have to discuss it with his colleagues, should be making a decision in respect to the minimum wage.

Now just the other day, I read where profits have gone up for Weston's but there has been no increase for the people on minimum wage. Food prices, costs of living, everything is rising. The government has even negotiated with the civil servants once, with the doctors once. They are in the process of negotiating this second time, Mr. Speaker, and yet these people who are just subsisting, and probably some of them are really having problems in respect to keeping body and soul together, are not being considered by this government.

Yes, they have indicated that we, while we were in office had not made the decision to increase the rate for the minimum wage just prior to an election, but . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please. The Honourable Attorney-General on a point of order.

**MR. MERCIER:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, and it's one that I attempted to raise the other day but I think the member has gone further than the Member for St. Johns did in his comments. I suggest again that debate should be directed toward the amendments before the House and the increase in the exemptions that are contained in this bill, and shouldn't be directed toward the question whether or not the minimum wage should be increased.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Does the Honourable Member for Kildonan wish to speak on the point of order or on the bill? On the point of order.

**MR. FOX:** Right. First of all the principle of the bill is before us and the Attorney-General himself was the one who raised the particular issue in respect to the minimum wage. And secondly, I believe, Mr. Speaker, yesterday you indicated to him he did not have a point of order when the Member for St. Johns spoke on this particular issue. So under those circumstances I can see that the Attorney-General is having problems and he's squirming but I think his conscience should bother him in respect to the people who are on minimum wage, never mind to the debate. Let me just say this in respect to garnishment . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please. Are you still on the same point of order?

**MR. JORGENSON:** May I intervene on that particular point of order, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Before I entertain any comment from the Government House Leader, I want to know if the Member for Kildonan is still on the same point of order.

**MR. FOX:** I had completed the point of order, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. JORGENSEN:** Mr. Speaker, as you are aware, the House now is seized with a new rule book, Beauchesne's 5th Edition, which we are supposed to be following, and on Citation 739 on page 225 of that particular rule book there appears this particular citation, "On the second reading of an amending bill, it is the principle of the amending bill, not the principle of the Act itself, which is the business under consideration. Debate and proposed amendments must therefore relate exclusively to the principle of the amending bill. "

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

**MR. CHERNIACK:** Mr. Speaker, may I too speak on the point of order indicating to you, firstly, that you said just the other day — yesterday, I think it was — that Beauchesne is just a guide and not really a rule. But nevertheless the guide that was read by the Honourable the House Leader is that one speak to the principle of the Bill and not to the Act itself. Well the Bill is an amendment to The Garnishment Act and the Bill changes the amount of the exemption for garnishment on wages and that amount is related both by the Attorney-General and, through him, by the Law Reform Commission to the minimum wage.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if the minimum wage were \$1,000 a month then the Attorney-General would have considered 70 percent of \$1,000 and the amount would be different.

The point, I believe, that's being made by the Member for Elmwood is that the minimum wage determines the amount that is being shown and that is precisely what he is discussing, the changing of the amount in the garnishment exemption, and its relationship to some measurable standard and that is what he is discussing because the Attorney-General tied it to the minimum wage.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please. May I point out to all members that the rules, as laid down by our Legislative Assembly, and those that have been laid down in Beauchesne, are for the guidance not just of the Speaker, but for the guidance of every member of the Chamber. And I would hope that every member of the Chamber would attempt to govern himself accordingly. It is my intention to listen very carefully to what members have to say and if, from time to time, I feel they are extending themselves slightly beyond what can normally be accepted, I will make every effort to ask the member to contain his remarks to the subject matter at hand. The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

**MR. FOX:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I certainly appreciate your guidance in this matter.

Let me get back to The Garnishment Act and indicate to the Minister again, much as I am in favour of amending it to upgrade it to keep it in line with changing times, I do believe that he and his colleagues should consider upgrading the minimum wage at the same time.

Exactly that point, Mr. Speaker, also raises another problem in respect to The Garnishment Act, because when that is changed will then The Garnishment Act have to be reamended? If that is going to be the case, why does not the Attorney-General suggest a formula which we could follow, one that would be tied to whatever standard he wishes to use? In this instance, he used the minimum wage. I'm sure that in future he is not going to use the minimum wage because his conscience will be digging him and bothering him in the future, so he will stay away from that particular subject.

On that note, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say once more, I do hope the Treasury Bench will have a good look at the minimum wage, as well, while they are considering other matters. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Wellington.

**MR. CORRIN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it was with some interest that yesterday I listened to the Honourable Attorney-General disclose to this House figures relative to the number of garnishing orders that had been processed through our court jurisdiction in the past few years.

It was of considerable interest to note that the number of garnishment orders actually filed with respect to the County Court of Winnipeg jurisdiction had risen from 1977 figures of 2,420 to a 1978, what I presume must be an all-time high, of 3,649.

I should note, Mr. Speaker, that this increase — I haven't calculated it but I believe it would represent something in the order of 50 percent in one year — is of considerable concern to myself and other members on this side. It would indicate — and I suppose I have to say somewhat facetiously, to my honourable friend — that there is indeed proof that there is a growth industry in Manitoba under his government, and that is in the area of course of bailiff services. This should warm the cockles of the heart of the Member for Wolseley.

I would indicate, Mr. Speaker, that it's of considerable concern to me because although I appreciate the need — and I say this now as a lawyer, a person who deals all the time in the area of creditors' rights and debtors' obligation and rights — I appreciate the need to expand creditors' rights with respect to the effective period or the life expectancy of garnishing orders, and I appreciate the substance and significance of what my honourable friend is attempting to do in expanding the right of the creditor in this regard. I say that because I have personally experienced the hardship as a solicitor representing a creditor in trying to meet the rather onerous deadlines that were imposed by the former law. So I can say that to some extent I laud the Honourable Minister for this amendment, even though it is of a technical nature it will ease the very often unfair burden that is placed on creditors when trying to levy their debts from debtors.

But having said that, Mr. Speaker, I must signify my concern that there has been this considerable growth in the area of garnishment. I would indicate also my concern because my research has taken me a little further afield — the same court office — but nevertheless a little further afield into the area of bankruptcy, I discussed the question of garnishment in the context of bankruptcy with several court officials just on an unofficial basis, of course, but in reviewing the number of files that have been opened and the number of assignments made in bankruptcy in this province, 1978 over 1977, I found again an alarming 10-½ percent increase.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Attorney-General.

**MR. MERCIER:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I find the subject matter of bankruptcies in Manitoba of no relevance whatsoever to the Bill before us.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Willington, proceed.

**MR. CORRIN:** Yes, I would indicate that the whole garnishment process, of course — and I say this with respect to my learned and honourable colleague — the whole garnishment process, of course, is intimately involved with bankruptcy. As a matter of fact in my experience as a solicitor, I might tell him — and I'm sure he would share my experience and candidly admit the same — that usually it is as a result of strident attempts to exercise garnishment rights that debtors find their way to the bankruptcy courts. So the two are inexorably linked and I'm sure he is mindful of that. I know that he, in a sense, is pulling our leg, Mr. Speaker, because he has practised a great many years himself in this city and he is aware of this.

But I should tell him that I found and discovered that in 1978, in terms of the gross number of bankruptcy assignments and pockets opened in his courts, there were some 658 assignments made in Manitoba, as opposed to 1977 figures of only 595. THOSE FIGURES, I believe are irrefutable and reliable, Mr. Speaker, and I would indicate that, again, cause for concern.

I think that my concern is best mirrored, Mr. Speaker, in the remarks, in the analysis, and perhaps I should cite what I am referring to, a document entitled "The Analysis of the Characteristics of Bankrupts and Their Observations on the Program" subtitled "The Study of the Small Debtor Program in Manitoba." This was an analysis made of the small debtor program service supervised and administered by my honourable friend, the Attorney-General, and it was conducted by Professor T. K. Hyra of the Dept. of Family Studies at the University of Manitoba in January of this year. Professor Hyra concluded, and I think it is significant, Mr. Speaker, he concludes that in more than half the cases he researched, 52.11 per cent to be precise, the cause of bankruptcy insolvency was associated with lack of prudent financial management, and I quote, Mr. Speaker. The professor goes on to suggest that over the last few years his study indicated that loss of income or unemployment was not the primary cause of insolvency or bankruptcy in this province, but rather, the cause was associated with the lack of prudent financial management.

Now, Mr. Speaker, to perhaps bear more emphasis, to bring more emphasis to my point, I should disclose further statistics because they are of relevance, and I know my honourable friend, the Attorney-General, will be interested to know — and this I found remarkable, but it's apparently a fact Canadians today are the biggest users of consumer credit in the entire world. I marveled at that. Apparently 22 per cent of the personal disposable income of people in this country is expended on consumer credit, which is remarkable, when taken in the context, Mr. Speaker, of our friends to the south, the United States of America, showing a comparable figure of only some 14 per cent. I find it remarkable that we, in this country, Mr. Speaker, are burdened by 8 per cent more consumer credit than those to the south. It indicates, Mr. Speaker, to me, that we have a very serious problem in this country and that although the government, — I might say it seems governments everywhere today are calling for public — restraint demonstrating a concern for restraint in terms of public expenditure we have a crisis in the area of private fiscal management.

The families of our province and our country are hopelessly, hopelessly mired almost to the extent of 25 per cent in consumer credit. And I would suggest that it's improper for us as public legislators to, on the one hand call for restraint in our sector, in our sphere of concern, and not at the same time make earnest efforts to rationalize the situation that currently exists in the private sector. Manitoba families are deficit financing, Mr. Speaker, they're deficit financing to an extent to which they have never before done. Many of them, as Professor Hira has indicated, are lacking the capacity, the skill, the background, and education to prudently manage their finances. They are being hopelessly mired in debt.

I am aware this is good for business, Mr. Speaker, and here I suppose is the rub. Of course it's good for business, and I note in dealing with Amendments to the Corporations Act of this province, we're going to be dealing with this very subject, the extension of consumer credit provisions in order that trust companies can embark on larger concerns that have more latitude. But, Mr. Speaker, although it is in a sense good business — and I say that in the sense that people make money from the consumer credit — I suggest that it's now necessary and it's incumbent on us to devise ways and means by which we can protect the consumer from unnecessary irresponsible, imprudent handling of his or her financial management.

I suggest that the way we can do that, Mr. Speaker, and I address my concern not only to the Honourable Attorney-General but to the Minister for Consumer Affairs, the way we can do that most effectively Mr. Speaker, is to establish in our schools a program of financial management, a program that would educate our youth as to the pitfalls and advantages of consumer credit. Give them the capacity when they do reach their majority and are able to contract for this sort of credit, give them the capacity to do so on a rational studied skilled basis in much the same way that we give them a capacity to read, to write, and to do basic arithmetic calculations. I suggest that it's imperative that we give them the wherewithal to deal with the pressures that they will confront, that they will face, relative to consumer credit.

I don't know, and I'm sure that many members would agree, I don't know of any sector of the private economy that can make a more effective blandishment to our people. I don't know of any sector that more effectively creates a wish or a desire than the consumer credit industry. Anybody here who watches television must be familiar of course with the man advertisements that are put forward to buy, to buy any one of a number of material items, consumer products that are undoubtedly to many very desirable, but notwithstanding that, very often beyond the financial means of many of our families.

And, Mr. Speaker, in order to emphasize my point as to the need to educate youth, I would indicate that it's not, in terms of imprudent financial management, it's not our people in their middle years that are falling prey to this, but rather our young people in their mid-20s. And bankruptcy figures in this country, in 1978 indicated that personal bankruptcies in Canada for persons in that age group, in the mid-20s, were up 20 per cent, 1978 over 1977. That, Mr. Speaker, is remarkable. In one year, a 20 per cent increase in that select age range. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that that is as a result of this very strong, this very determined effort by the consumer credit industry, by the manufacturers and sellers of material goods to create this need, to create a desire for that sort of material acquisition, and that sort of response, the response that they're able to create is reflected in these figures. I would indicate that that group represents 45 per cent of all bankruptcies, 45 per cent of all bankruptcies, almost half of all bankruptcies in this country relate to people under 30 years of age. That, Mr. Speaker, is tragic, because those are the people who are, of course, in terms of circumstances, most dependant on good prudent, sound fiscal management, because those are the people with young families and, hopefully, with long futures.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Honourable Attorney-General and the Honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Consumer Affairs to give consideration not only to expanding credit rights, creditor rights, but also consumers rights. I would ask them to give consideration to establishing proper programs of education in the schools in order that young people know what they're going to have to be up against and prepare themselves adequately to do the job. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Logan.

**MR. JENKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My remarks on this are going to be very brief. I think since the minister has stated that his changes will be pegged to the minimum wage here in Manitoba, I hope that in light of this that the criticism that the minister has received, that he will be anticipating making some changes when the Bill comes to Law Amendments Committee.

I also hope, too, Mr. Speaker, that it doesn't indicate a closed mind of the government, not particularly to the Attorney-General, but I mean the Treasury Benches as a whole over there with

respect to the minimum wage that is going to remain static at its present status for too much longer. I know that there will be a Resolution appearing before this House in a few short days, but I do think that it should be pointed out to the government benches over there that, hopefully, that they are not just tipping their hand at the present time and saying that to all intents and purposes, that \$2.95 an hour is what the minimum wage is going to be since the legislation and the amendments to the legislation that the Honourable Attorney-General has introduced into this House are based at the present time on \$2.95 an hour which is \$118.00 for a 40-hour week. And so I hope that he will take serious cognizance of the fact that it should not be based on this, or if it is based on this that there is some way that if and when the minimum wage in Manitoba is raised, and we hope it's in the very near future, that the minister won't be coming back before the Session is completed asking for more changes in the Garnishment Act.

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

**MR. MERCIER:** Well, Mr. Speaker, it's no wonder that sometimes the public is justified in losing faith in their elected representatives. We have here a case of a Bill being introduced within a very short few months of receiving a report from the Law Reform Commission on this very important subject which goes a long way — and I must dispute the Member for Wellington's comments that the Bill is directed towards improving the situation of creditors. This is a Bill which makes substantial increases in the exemptions for debtors and is virtually a Bill designed to improve the situation solely of creditors, Mr. Speaker. But yet, we have the comments of the Member for Wellington who refers to somehow the performance of the government related to an increase in the number of garnisheeing orders in the County Court in 1978 compared to 1977. He doesn't make any reference to the drastic decrease in garnisheeing orders in the Court of Queen's Bench from — it was a substantial increase, I don't have the figures with me, Mr. Speaker. He doesn't refer to the fact that there was a substantial, over a 50 per cent decrease in the number of statements of claim filed in the County Court over 1977, the last year of the previous government.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to bankruptcies, he didn't mention Mr. Speaker that in Manitoba in 1978 compared to 1977, there was a 34 per cent decrease in business bankruptcies in Manitoba. The first year of the Administration of this government compared to the last year of their government and the number of personal bankruptcies has remained constant from 1977 to 1978. But Mr. Speaker, there has been a substantial improvement, I think, in the position of creditors with the increase in the amount of exemptions introduced in this Bill as a result of the recommendations of the Law Reform Commission which are adopted in this Bill.

I'm pleased, Mr. Speaker, to hear the comments of the Member for Wellington with respect to deficit financing of many young Manitobans. And I hope, Mr. Speaker, that he will consult with the Member for Brandon East who has made his comments known on deficit financing and I hope that the Member for Wellington can persuade the Member for Brandon East to adopt his Conservative financing philosophy, one that is accepted in the United States and California and the rest of Canada at the present time, but not yet accepted by the Member for Brandon East. Mr. Speaker, a lot of these comments as I tried to say were irrelevant to the principles in this Bill and I do believe that the principle of the bill is accepted by members opposite, the increase in exemptions to creditors and other improvements in the bill which will assist creditors in cases where garnishment orders are issued. And I know, being politicians, I guess I can't stop them from using every means and device possible to introduce other political comments.

**QUESTION put, MOTION carried.**

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre on Bill No. 16. (Stand.)

### **BILL NO. 17 — AN ACT TO AMEND THE PUBLIC PRINTING ACT**

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

**MR. FOX:** I adjourned this bill for the Honourable Member for Elmwood, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

**MR. DOERN:** Mr. Speaker, it's quite obvious why I was chosen to speak on this bill, because for a period of two years I subscribed to that well-known magazine, "Printer's Ink" and that is basically my association.

I wanted to make just a few remarks on the bill and I have perused it and discussed it with some knowledgeable friends in regard to what is contained, and I think there's really only one section that I wanted to comment on to the Minister, and that is the elimination of the requirement that the Queen's Printer be a qualified printer, and have five years experience. Previously, and I guess since the origin of the Queen's Printer, the Queen's Printer always was, in fact, a qualified printer who had some experience, and now the government sees fit to change. So I would be interested, Mr. Speaker, in hearing the Minister's reasoning for the change. He gave us a preliminary original sketch but we know that for a very long period of time, I don't know how many years but most of the time I have been in this Assembly, Mr. Evans was the Queen's Printer. He was then replaced for a year or a year and a half by Mr. Crosbie, and I gather that a Mr. Bill Matwichyna is now the Acting Queen's Printer since October of 1978.

I gather that if and when this change occurs that the position will be re-bulletined and that a new competition for a new Queen's Printer will, in fact take place.

So I think that the questions that I have for the Minister are basically why this change, in the sense of is it not desirable — and I think the Minister indicated that he thought, in fact it was — desirable that the Queen's Printer have experience and if I read the requirements correctly, it called for a printer with five years' experience, which means that you would have a person who basically had either six years' experience under the old apprenticeship system, four years under the present, they would have that sort of background, then become a journeyman printer, and then an additional five years. So you could say, in effect, that under the old system and the old provision, a person would have ten years' experience in the printing trade before he could then become the Queen's Printer. Now, that has been eliminated, presumably somebody could come in with no experience in the trade. So I would simply question that particular change, and ask the Minister to justify it.

The other thing that I have in mind that I would ask the Minister to allay, is the fear that somebody may already be kept in mind for the position and that I would hope that this provision is not for the purpose of bringing in somebody else with no experience, and therefore easing the way to their appointment. I hope that that is not the intent of the legislation.

So Mr. Speaker, with those few remarks I would say that we intend to support the bill in principle.

**MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The Member for St. Johns.

**MR. CHERNIACK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was glancing at the bill and there is one aspect to which I would like to direct the Honourable Minister's attention, and not necessarily for a response when he closes debate, but possibly during committee. As I say, I did not do any research on this, so I would like to get some clarification from the Minister.

On the last page of the bill, there is a concept that the costs of publishing the Manitoba Gazette should be paid for out of the moneys allocated in Estimates, and that all revenues should form part of the Consolidated Fund. Now, I have the present Act before me and I've not yet seen whether there is a distinction made, a change in procedure, but I am under the impression that there are certain receipts now that are allocated to a special fund, out of which costs are charged, and that there is a change being proposed. Regardless of whether or not I am right, and as I say, I have not researched it, the intent of this bill is very clear, and that is, all revenues coming to Manitoba Gazette for, I presume, advertisements, notices and subscriptions, will form part of the Consolidated Fund.

I'd like to know, in due course, and I suppose that would come up in the Estimates to find out to the extent to which this department, that is the Manitoba Gazette, is self-sustaining or incurs a loss or invites a profit in effect. But I'd like the Minister to consider the principle of all revenues going into the Consolidated Fund and not be related directly to the expenses.

The reason I raise that, Mr. Speaker, is that I had occasion to be debating another bill, Bill 16, where the contrary principle was adopted and that is, that certain incomes of the province would be diverted directly into an expenditure. I therefore would like to have the Minister's idea as to the advisability of removing revenues and expenditures from the general Estimates of the province, and allocating them in specific ways. This might be a rather obvious way, that if the Manitoba Gazette should be required to pay for itself, then all the revenues should be adjusted to correspond to the costs. And I believe that that might be desirable.

If, on the other hand, the government considers that charges for notices that are required to be made in the Gazette, and that is compulsory I think in all cases, that there should be revenue coming to the province, a net revenue resulting, that could be another policy matter. But since the Minister will be responding I would like very much to hear the principle that he considers proper, in general, that is characterized by this bill on the last page, as I say, wherein there is that principle

developed as to revenue going to Consolidated Fund and expenses being charged out of the Estimates. That, I believe is different to some of the other ways that this government is proposing to deal with revenue and expenditures and I gave him specifically reference of Bill 16 and I do not know, and I've already stated that I do not know, how it is being done at the present time.

I would like to hear that, Mr. Speaker, at this time or at a time convenient to the Honourable Minister.

**MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The Honourable House Leader will be closing debate.

**MR. JORGENSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In response to my honourable friend's question, the change is largely, and I won't go into the details, I think it perhaps more properly dealt with when we're in the committee stage, but essentially the change is as a result of a recommendation of the Provincial Auditor for accounting purposes. He feels that it's a better way of handling the money of the Queen's Printer, rather than the present system, which he maintains is somewhat cumbersome and does not provide the auditing procedures that he had recommended to the government, which we're attempting to adopt as a part of this bill.

The other question that was raised by the Member for Elmwood —(Interjection)— I'm not too sure that I could do that for my honourable friend. It is somewhat involved and I don't know whether I have grasped it as fully as I should. I hope that by the time the bill gets to committee that I'll be able to outline in greater detail just exactly the practice that is being followed at the present time and what we hope to do.

But in response to the question asked by the Member for Elmwood concerning the qualifications of the Queen's Printer, that change is brought about, as I explained in the introduction of the bill, brought about as a result of the change in the nature of the work that is being done by the Queen's Printer at the present time. It is felt that it is no longer necessary to have anyone with printing experience, but rather it is necessary to have someone with good administrative experience. I believe there is only one other Act that spells out the qualifications of a Deputy, and I believe that's in the Department of Health that states that the Deputy must be a medical doctor. I'm not too sure whether that particular qualification is necessary there either. What we're assuming is that the Civil Service Commission, in advertising or bulletining for this particular position are aware of the qualifications that are necessary and will attempt to insure that whoever is being hired is a person who will have the qualifications that are necessary in order to carry on the functions of the Queen's Printer.

That is essentially the rationale behind the change, and I believe my honourable friend will agree that at the present time it is hardly necessary, the functions have changed considerably over the years. I was under the impression that my honourable friends opposite were the progressive ones, were the ones that were seeking changes in order to keep pace with the times. What we're attempting to do here is precisely that. When job specifications change, then it is no longer necessary to be tied down to a particular specification that no longer applies for that particular job, as indeed the last Queen's Printer, who resigned his position, resigned because he was a printer and had no time for the administrative work that was necessary, which was taking up far more of his time than the actual job of printing. For that reason the qualifications are being removed from the Act, and I'm sure that my honourable friend will agree that when the applicants appear before the Commission they will be able to determine which one meets the particular qualifications they feel are necessary, and I can assure my honourable friend that the job is not being set aside. My honourable friend seems to have a guilt complex in raising this particular matter because we all know too well precisely the practice that occurred when they were on this side of the House. I can assure my honourable friend that that is not what is happening, that the present incumbent, Mr. Matwichyna, happens to have some very high qualifications for that particular position, and I would expect that he'd be a candidate for the position. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that deals with all of the questions that were asked and I thank my honourable friends for their comments.

**QUESTION put MOTION carried.**

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

**MR. JORGENSON:** Mr. Speaker, since it is almost 4:25, I wonder whether or not it would be advisable to go into Estimates for five minutes. I wonder if my honourable friends would be agreeable to going into Private Members' Hour and adjourning approximately this time around 5:23 or so, whatever the case may be.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

**MR. FOX:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, we're prepared to go into Private Members' Hour if you will deduct that same time as we go through and end up that much sooner.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Is there agreement in the House that we now proceed to Private Members' Hour? (Agreed)

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

#### RESOLUTION NO. 4 — INCOME RELATED SHELTER ALLOWANCE PROGRAM

**MR. SPEAKER:** Under Private Members' Hour the first item of business is Resolution No. 4. The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

**MR. AXWORTHY:** Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Member for St. Boniface, that:

WHEREAS there are many Manitobans especially the elderly and the single parent who cannot afford proper housing, and

WHEREAS there have been significant changes in housing programs, reducing the supply of publicly subsidized housing units.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Government consider the advisability of:

1. Establishing a program of shelter allowance or tax credit system in the province that would cover housing costs above the level of 25 percent of income, and
2. That such shelter allowances be designed in phases, aiming first at those most in need.

**MR. SPEAKER:** You've heard the Motion proposed by the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge, seconded by the Member for St. Boniface. Are you ready for the Question? The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

**MR. AXWORTHY:** Mr. Speaker, before we rush into total acceptance of this Resolution, some means of explanation is probably at hand and I think that we shouldn't pass over it too lightly because there are some significant changes occurring in the provision of housing in the Province of Manitoba that thus far haven't been addressed very directly by Members of this House.

Not only have we had a change in government with a change in philosophy in its approach to publicly-subsidized housing but we've also had a major change in federal legislation within the past year, and certain changes within the City of Winnipeg. The result of these changes, Mr. Speaker, is to put a pressure on the availability of lower cost, lower income housing throughout the province, particularly in the City of Winnipeg and in particular to put a pressure and squeeze upon the incomes of people and what they can afford.

I'm reminded of a CMHC Survey that was done in the city about 1974 which indicated at the time that over 30 percent of households in the city had what they called affordability problems' in other words, were paying more than 25 percent of their income for housing. Recent documents, Mr. Speaker, I think have been able to pinpoint those problems far more precisely and indicate that there are groups of the population who have far more substantial needs even than that, and I'd like to draw to your attention some figures which point out that if you isolate those families — and this is based upon a fairly sound survey method that was undertaken by the Social Planning Council — that some 57 percent of single parent families, in fact, have severe affordability problems in housing, or to put it in more common terms, are paying above 25 percent of their income for housing. But if you look at single households of people over 65 years of age, close to 37 percent of those have the same kind of affordability problems. When you put that into actual numbers we're talking probably close to 15,000 combined households in the City of Winnipeg alone who are facing those kinds of pressures and those kinds of difficulties.

Many of these people, Mr. Speaker, are occupants in the private market, older rental housing, which is also being eliminated substantially, that the City of Winnipeg has undertaken for the past three years a very aggressive Maintenance By-law, Safety By-law, which is designed to eliminate substandard structures and structures that could be considered unsafe. One of the by-products, however, of that by-law is the elimination of substantial numbers of older housing which is in that modest cost range. I think the numbers again, I'm doing it a little bit from memory' I believe there were about 1200 units had been eliminated the last three to four years.

Now, what it means is that as those units are being eliminated really not very much is going into replace them. I point out that in the last year of 1978-79 housing programs sponsored by the

Provincial Government, there were some 370 units of publicly-assisted housing sponsored in the City of Winnipeg which is not enough to keep up with the actual numbers that are being taken out, so that we're increasingly running into a shortfall position of not being able to even maintain the present stock. Now, as that lower cost stock is eliminated or eroded or taken out then obviously the only option and choice the people have is to begin paying higher percentages of their income because the rents are higher — they have to go up. And I think it's fair to say that for anybody with two children and a family, trying to acquire just a fairly minimal new apartment block, they are paying well in advance of \$375 to \$400 for a new building.

Now, it doesn't take a great deal of mathematical skill, and this is not socialist mathematics or anything else, it's simple mathematics, to recognize that if you are living below the poverty line you simply can't afford that. So what has happened is that there are increasingly large numbers of people in the province who are paying higher and higher proportions of their income, 30, 40, 50 percent, simply to maintain themselves in their present occupancy. They don't have the alternative to go anywhere, they're being squeezed on the other side by the lower cost housing being eliminated so they have no choice but to pay more and more.

As a consequence you're finding that some pretty serious repercussions can occur. One is that the person having to make that choice is constantly under a cloud of always trying to secure somewhat cheaper accommodations, and one only has to look at the transient rates in certain parts of the City of Winnipeg to realize, if you look at some of the schools in the City of Winnipeg where there is turnover rates of 80, 90 percent in one year, you discover that one of the reasons is because the families are being forced constantly to move to look after new accommodation.

We also have in that particular sector the problem that the rent controls are now being phased out and it is that group of people who can least afford it who are being most affected by the de-controlling of rents because they are the ones who move and as soon as they move the rental unit comes back on the market and the rents therefore are not being controlled to the 6 percent as they are in other units.

Now, the answers to that problem, Mr. Speaker, I think require some imagination. Section 43, the old Public Housing Statute, is no longer with us. I think that the last units will be built under it this year. In its stead the Federal Government has replaced its financing with a new program that offers a substantial write-down of interest rates on loans for lower income housing. How the plan really works is that a non-profit or community sponsor can go to a Bank or a Credit Union and borrow money at the normal rate and the Federal Government's prepared then to write that down to 1 or 2 percent, and obviously the savings are therefore passed on through the rent.

That, I think Mr. Speaker, has some interesting potentials to it because it does mean that we can increasingly encourage community associations, non-profit organizations, trade unions and others to get into the housing business, so it isn't solely government sponsored and managed. But the problem is first you have to get them into the market and, secondly, once they do get in the question is, will the rents themselves still be at a level that the poorest families can afford? From the figures I've given you earlier it's quite clear that many of them can't because for those families still living below the poverty line, which represents about 70 percent of the population of this province, they could not afford the rents even under the 1 or 2 percent interest program.

What is also becoming recently clear is that the government involvement in this program is going to be restrictive. The City of Winnipeg has now decided not to get into it at all, a very tragic and, I guess, ludicrous decision when you . . . someone pointed out to me, they refused to spend, what was it, \$20,000 start-up funds but they were prepared to put \$17,000 in a float in the Grey Cup, but they somehow couldn't ante up enough money to help meet administrative costs for a non-profit housing corporation, which shows where their priorities lie, and I guess we know where their priorities lie because they probably say what their political affiliations are. But the fact of the matter is that they're not in the business.

What we're not so sure of is what the province is going to do, Mr. Speaker. They haven't really said. Are they, in fact, going to set up a non-profit corporation to take advantage of the federal program, or are they not? —(Interjection)— Well, there's one there but it's not really activated. The Member for West Kildonan is quite right that there is a corporation in being. It's simply that no one is operating it at the present moment.

So in that period of uncertainty I think the only clear answer that we have is that we have to tackle the affordability problem. If we are unsure at this stage who's going to supply the housing, at minimum what we have to do is ensure, while all the waiting and uncertainty is going on, that some initiative is taken to ensure that people aren't severely damaged and that their own incomes aren't sort of wrecked apart by the lack of any kind of support.

And so, Mr. Speaker, the point of this Resolution is to suggest that we institute in the province a Shelter Allowance which would simply provide for a supplement to bring the rental level down of families down to the 25 percent level. There are examples, Mr. Speaker, of the program being

applied in other places. We do have a form of Rental Allowance now in the province under Federal Legislation, No. 44(1)(a) and 44(1)(b) but that only can be assigned directly, that the units themselves are subsidized. It doesn't really apply to the larger private market where the tenant, or the rentor himself can make application, but what I would suggest to Members of the House is that we take a serious look at the so-called safer program in British Columbia or the New Rent Supplement Program now being offered in New Brunswick where they in fact simply provide for an application of a family or a household to gain a supplement to bring their rental levels down to the 25 percent level. Now I think in B.C. in fact it's the 30 percent level.

These programs, Mr. Speaker, by all evaluations being done, and if members are interested, I have an evaluation that was done by the Canadian Council on Social Development at a recent conference, have worked out quite well. They've enabled older people in particular to stay in their apartments, their homes, without suffering severe financial damage. They have been able to have a side benefit of preserving and maintaining older buildings because stable tenants are prepared to stay in them, and at the same time they have provided some incentive to non-profit groups to get into the field because they know the supplement is available to help pay for the rents.

Now, one of the questions, of course, that would immediately arise is, what is this all going to cost? Well, in the Resolution, Mr. Speaker, you'll notice that I suggested that we can't tackle the total affordability program all in one gulp — obviously everyone of us is affected and conditioned by the call for restraint — but I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that if in the first phase we were simply to introduce a program that was targeted at single parent families, who are the most susceptible and in the most dire need, and to elderly people, those over 65, and for single people in the age bracket of 50 and above who have low incomes, that the total cost of such a program would not be any higher than \$8 million a year. And that is based, again, on sampling and techniques that were done by the Social Planning Council. That we could establish a very attractive and constructive program of rent allowance and shelter allowance in its first phase, covering off many of the severe affordability problems for about \$8 million a year. If you think of it in those terms, Mr. Speaker, that's about one-quarter of 1 percent of the total provincial budget, which I think we can afford.

What it will mean, Mr. Speaker, is that we would be able, therefore, to bridge the gap that presently exists in our housing programs and to ensure that there will be the kind of assistance that is necessary to meet the very severe needs of the groups that I have mentioned, and also then to establish a proper testing of a program to determine its availability and extent to which it can be applied to other groups in the population.

I want to make it clear, Mr. Speaker, that I don't think this, in itself, is enough. I don't suggest that we would stop at this kind of housing program. I have argued in this House for many years now that what we really lack substantially in Manitoba is a rental housing program. We tend to attack it in bits and pieces. We have *ad hoc* programs. The previous government primarily concentrated its efforts on public housing but ignored other parts of the rental housing market. The present government is closing down the public housing market and is emphasizing God knows what; I assume that they are emphasizing something but at this stage we're not too sure.

But what it really means in the rental housing market is, first, tackle the problem of cost of rental housing: the questions of Hydro, the questions of supply and the questions of construction; and, secondly, to tackle the supply problem: Who in fact is responsible for supplying it and where does it go; and, thirdly, to tackle the question of rent gouging and rent excesses where they are unnatural and unwarranted, which means that there still should be the maintenance of a form of Rent Review Program, which we have argued for in the past; and, fourthly, a rent allowance or shelter allowance program to make up for affordability problems.

That would seem to be the basic elements in a proper effective rental program sponsored by the Province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's important, also, to emphasize that the province can't, any longer, say, "It's not our responsibility." That one of the clear changes that has occurred is that the provinces across Canada have been insisting for the past three or four years that the federal government was being too interventionist, too activist, too involved in the housing market. They wanted them out. They said simply, "Give us the money and we'll do the job." And the government has been moving towards a bloc funding agreement and with its new financial arrangement it's simply now providing subsidies on capital.

So the provinces have got what they wanted. They now have the clear responsibility. They are the centre-point for housing policy now in this country. They have got to take up those responsibilities. It is not a shared as it was before.

I think that we, perhaps too easily, let the municipalities off the hook in this one, but nonetheless the province now carries the major brunt of developing a proper rental housing program for this province. Again I would suggest that the shelter allowance would be the building block and a good

start in producing that kind of policy.

I think it's also important to bring forward, Mr. Speaker, that in assessing the kind of initiatives that should be taken one has to recognize that the carrying cost, the subsidy cost, under the former public housing program were going highly exorbitant, that what we were really doing is catching ourselves in a financial trap because the subsidies were related totally to new construction and it is quite clear, even now, that the monthly subsidy rates for public housing units were ranging anywhere from \$200 to sometimes \$400 a month, depending on the size of the unit and the number of people in it.

So one of the advantages of the kind of shelter allowances applied to the tenant who then chooses his or her own accommodation is that it should provide a lower cost or cheaper alternative to the larger subsidies that were being built into the public housing units. And one of the differences, of course, is simply that you are dealing with older units which have lower carrying costs than the brand new construction. Now, you won't totally and you shouldn't totally eliminate the shelter allowance for newer construction in itself but it does mean that it can now apply to the largest volume of housing, 95 percent of our housing that has been constructed is more than five years old — we only really add an increment of about 1 percent a year in terms of new construction — and so therefore those costs will provide a . . . in the amount of the subsidy bill that is being paid out.

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

**MR. AXWORTHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, the argument comes about — maybe we shouldn't be doing anything at all. Now, I can perhaps expect that some members opposite might say, "Well, if the subsidy bill is getting so high, maybe we shouldn't be in it at all." Well, I think to make that statement, of course — and maybe I shouldn't be putting words in their mouth or giving them suggestions for an argument — it would simply be to ignore the fundamental questions of justice and equity, which I think that they're not prepared to ignore, but also mean by not providing this affordability or shelter allowance questions they are also in danger of allowing an increased deterioration in our housing stock.

Again, one of the lessons that we're now learning is that deterioration of older housing stock is substantially related to the availability of income to support its upkeep and maintenance, and one of the reasons why we have a lot of slum housing is because we have a lot of poor people who can't sily afford proper housing. So you begin to improve the income position, then in its own way, an incentive for the preservation you provide and upgrading of those units.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, let me deal with one of the arguments that is sometimes used against a shelter allowance program, and it is that it is inflationary. That in periods where there is a tight housing supply that it then can provide simply an opportunity for a landlord or an owner to up the rents.

Well I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that we have a very curious situation in the city at the present moment. We really have a split level housing market. There is a substantial availability of units in the outer fringe of the city, units that were built under the ARP Program, and quite a short supply in the inner city area. But I think that the shelter allowance, in itself, could match both those problems and would provide a balancing between those two markets. It would attach itself to the sub-markets in housing. I can see that there may be some risk, that there could be some inflationary pressures, but then the obvious answer for the provincial government is then to address itself to the supply problem, to ensure that there then would be sufficient units coming on stream through the application of the new federal program, the new Non-Profit Program, to ensure that the supply of units at a lower cost was coming on and then the supplement itself would make a difference.

And then someone else is going to argue, Mr. Speaker, that if you took a comparison, if you even built a new unit in a downtown location under the new Non-Profit Program, the annual monthly subsidy for a 2-bedroom unit would be approximately about \$70 a month, under this kind of shelter allowance program' which is substantially cheaper than the public housing subsidy that was going in before, because the subsidy is now being shared through the interest rates and through the direct subsidy.

So I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that it is really imperative that we introduce, at this time, a shelter allowance program directed in the first instance to those who have the most severe needs,

those 3,000 or 4,000 single parent families, those 7,000 or 8,000 elderly households who are now experiencing a severe pinch on their incomes and, frankly, are having to substantially suffer a decline in their standard of living to the point where they are really beginning to wonder sort of where to go next. I think that a shelter allowance program phased as I have recommended in this resolution would be a very constructive and a relatively modest cost answer to their needs.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for St. James.

**MR. GEORGE MINAKER:** I listened to the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge with interest and with support in many of the statements he said. I know in his opening remarks he said something to the effect that before there is uniform agreement to my Resolution before the House I would like to say a few words.

I, too, agree that we should have some type of shelter tax credit or allowance for individuals in our society who have difficulty in providing the means of shelter in their own homes or from rented homes. I'm sure that the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge, who is a Very intelligent man, is quite aware that in the Throne Speech there has been mention of the fact that our government is presently preparing a White Paper to deal with the overall review of in our province. And in fact I can quote from tax rebates, tax credits' the Throne Speech, and it says, "I am informed that my government, which began a review of the effectiveness of property tax and cost-of-living tax rebate programs during the past year has expanded the examination to take into account the implications of recently announced federal government rebate programs." I underline this, "It is the intention of my government to issue a White Paper during the next few months which will, as far as possible, make recommendations to rationalize all related programs under an effective delivery system that best ensures that continuing financial support is provided to those most in need."

I could say, Mr. Speaker, that it is my understanding that in the White Paper that it is a White Paper that deals with tax credit shelter and other relief for the people of Manitoba, those most in need. So that I support the general principle before us in this Resolution that there should be some type of a tax credit or a tax credit shelter and other relief for our people.

Mr. Speaker, I also know, and I know the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge is sincere in putting forward this proposal because I, too, have many houses in my district, or in our district that we represent, where people are living who are finding it difficult to meet taxes and meet the rent. Many senior citizens — in fact, my parents are senior citizens as well and so I understand what they are going through. But I also am not naive enough to know that the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge would also like to have it believed in the Legislature here that it's his idea to bring forward the tax shelter credit this year or in the White Paper.

Well, I can inform you, Mr. Speaker, that the government is considering to include this type of consideration in the White Paper but is also including other general overviews of what really should we be looking at in terms of tax credits and reliefs to the people of Manitoba.

I cannot agree, Mr. Speaker, that we should designate a particular level in terms of percentage because I don't think that it would be wise to say 25 percent, 30 percent, 50 percent, because I don't know if the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge has all the information that is required in order to make that kind of recommendation, to know what kind of impact it might have on the overall cost of a program. I can understand and I believe the federal government's programs usually pick a figure like 25 percent. So that I would be much more supportive to leaving it up to advice from our people in our Finance Department and also our Health Department, and so on, to advise the government on what type of level of income we should be looking at in terms of percentage of cost to keep your shelter going to rent. So, Mr. Speaker, I cannot, in that way, support a fixed figure for the government to consider.

I listened with interest, Mr. Speaker, to the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge indicating that he would also like to see some type of relief where we get involved in reconstruction or construction, yet it's ironical that the government that is now in power, in federal power, the Liberal Party, has not seen fit to reduce its federal sales tax, say, on insulation, which is now the case in Manitoba where we have reduced the provincial sales tax. Mind you, it's not a major item, but it's still a principle, that if we wish to try and assist certain people, and heating bills are another cost factor, that it's funny that the federal government has not taken some kind of steps toward this in reducing the federal sales tax, and for that matter, giving consideration to possibly reducing the federal sales tax on building material.

Mr. Speaker, there are other areas that I am personally concerned with, an example being in my constituency, and I'm sure that many of us have the same problem, where we have senior citizens who own their own homes and they are receiving a tax credit on school tax, but they don't necessarily qualify for further tax relief because it doesn't exceed a certain value, even though they're over the retired age. It's my belief that there should be some review of this and I'm confident there

will be review of this, that people will be given consideration relating to the fact that it's wiser for them to own their own home and to be able to pay the taxes than to have to move out. So I would hope in the overall review that comes forward in the White Paper that this will be given consideration, too.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not one to extend a debate when one is basically in agreement with what is being proposed. However, in order to make it clear on how I support the resolution before us in the Legislature, I would like to make some minor amendments. I feel they are very minor amendments, and Mr. Speaker, I would like to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Rhineland, — Mr. Speaker, maybe I'll give a copy to you, Sir —

That in the fourth line of Whereas No. 2 after the word "of", add the following: "Including as part of the government White Paper on tax credit shelter and other relief, the following:"

And then, in the second line of Part 1 under the portion therefore resolved, delete the words "the level of 25 percent" and add after the word "above" the following: "An established level."

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if you would like me to read it as amended so that the

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for St. James, do you want to read it as it would be amended?

**MR. MINAKER:** Yes.

"WHEREAS there are many Manitobans, especially the elderly, and the single parent who cannot afford proper housing; and

"WHEREAS there have been significant changes in housing programs reducing the supply of publicly subsidized subsidized housing units" — then we add

"BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the government consider the advisability of including as part of the government White Paper on tax credit shelter and other relief, such as the following:

"1) Establishing program of shelter allowance or tax credit system in the province that would cover housing costs above an established level of income.

"2) And that such shelter allowance be designed in phases aiming first at those most in need."

**MR. SPEAKER:** You've heard the proposed amendment moved by the Honourable Member for St. James. Are you ready for the question? The Honourable Member for Transcona.

**MR. PARASIUK:** Mr. Speaker, neither the resolution nor the amendment deal with the real problems facing us with respect to housing supply and demand in Manitoba, and at some stage we on this side will be introducing an amendment to deal with that matter comprehensively.

Mr. Speaker, it's true that there are many Manitobans, especially the elderly and the single parents who cannot afford proper housing, and Mr. Speaker this is especially true because over the last year and a half there have been many changes in housing programs that have drastically reduced the supply of publicly subsidized housing units for senior citizens and for low income families. I agree with that part of the resolution. The question is, why has that happened. And it's happened because the federal government has decided to pull out of housing and is not giving sufficient resources to a province who is also deciding to pull out of housing. So when you combine those two negative thrusts, obviously you get a tremendous gap in society, and that's what's happening.

And the interesting thing is that I'm not sure whether the federal Liberals developed a strategy of pulling out of housing on their own or whether in fact they were copying the federal Conservatives. It's hard to say. Their policies are becoming so similar that it's difficult to say who is responsible for that particular thrust. But the effect has been catastrophic for senior citizens, catastrophic for single parents, and I can appreciate the concern that the Member for Fort Rouge shows when he brings forward a resolution like this. He's concerned, but he's not looking at the causes. And the causes in part, are close to home for him politically, and close to home for him geographically, and I think we have to look at the actions of both governments with respect to the supply of housing.

I think we've also got to look at the impact of federal Liberal and provincial Conservative cutbacks in transfer payments for senior citizens and cutbacks in transfer payments for single parents. That has helped to make housing less affordable. So if we want to talk about increasing the purchasing power or the disposable income of people so that they can afford to purchase or live in proper housing, I think we have to look at those types of cutbacks that have taken place. I see nothing

in this resolution that deals with that problem. And that is the weakness because I've not heard people come forward from the other side of the House saying that we should be increasing the incomes of people at the lower end of the income scale —(Interjection)— by increasing the minimum wage. By increasing the minimum wage. I've heard all these people say that we shouldn't increase the minimum wage. I've heard people say that they want to dismantle the tax credit system. And that'll reduce the income of these people even more so.

So if we want to talk seriously about the problems of supply and demand, let's look at them specifically. We've had federal cutbacks in senior citizens' housing; we've had them in low income housing; we've had them in the whole non-profit category. Everyone's talked about non-profit housing but when the community groups apply for non-profit housing, they are told by the federal people that they don't have enough money in the program to bring forward the projects this year. You know, it's part of this "now you see it, now you don't" federal Liberal syndrome that the provincial Minister of Housing fell for, and if you look at the Estimates for the Minister's department of last year, you will find that the Minister was saying, "Well, we've been told this by the federal Minister, we've been told that, we're going to change our program, we're going to use the new thrusts in the federal programming to provide subsidies to the private sector and deal with the housing needs of Manitobans." That's what he said in the Estimates review last year. He never got anything from the federal government. It's one year later and he's not been able to launch anything that he thought he would get, because he hasn't gotten anything from the federal Minister responsible for CMHC. So I think he's been fooled, and I think we've been fooled.

At the provincial level, we've had a provincial Minister who's been duped, but we also have a provincial Minister whose first acts were to cancel a whole set of projects that were in place. These were senior citizens projects. These were senior citizens projects. These were projects in Roblin, where he said that there wasn't sufficient demand. A year later, we find that there are 48 bona fide applications for a 42 unit residence which should have been built a year ago; which would have been built now; which would be right in there. But that hasn't happened, that hasn't happened because the Minister deliberately chose to cut back all these programs in the name of restraint, thinking that he would save money. Well, he's not saved the senior citizens who can't afford the housing any money. He hasn't saved them a penny. He hasn't saved the single parents who can't afford the housing any money by cutting back on those needed projects. —(Interjection)— He's increased the bird population.

What's happened is that he's left these people in the lurch, and we've got a one and a half year gap to try and catch up with now. And he's had to fall back, in the last little while, to introducing some of those projects that he cancelled when he first came into office. —(Interjection)— That's right, cancelled. And he's brought forward four of them, I think we'll have 350 units for senior citizens and low income families, that will be built if the commitments are followed up over the course of the next year, year and a half, but that certainly isn't enough to deal with the problems of affordability for housing facing senior citizens and low income people.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Tell us about Bell Avenue.

**MR. PARASIUK:** We have downtown Winnipeg being hurt, we've had a project in downtown Winnipeg last year, a fairly large one, cut back, and the way in which it's been done has been interesting as well.

In my constituency of Transcona, where we have a four year waiting list for senior citizens' housing, a project was in place and the Minister cancelled it, and said that there wasn't sufficient documented need. That's what he said in Roblin, as well. And he said that he would establish a group that would do an analysis of the real need in Transcona, and they would be in touch with the sponsoring group to work with this sponsoring group, to develop the exact definition of need, and then to build the project to meet that need. —(Interjection)— That's right, that was over a year and a half ago, and they haven't heard from him since. They're monitoring it, they're evaluating it. They have done nothing to follow up their commitment, and that sponsoring group, which is a church group, which tried to organize its efforts, that group has been duped as well. They took the Minister at his word, and they were waiting, and they've contacted him, asking him, when will we get this review group, when will we start looking at need? When will we start defining it? This is a year and a half after the Minister cancelled the project and promised them that they would have a review group to establish need.

I notice in a fairly substantive article by the Tribune on housing needs in downtown Winnipeg, that the present Chairman of the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation, one and a half years after assuming the position, is still saying, we are reviewing what the need is. We are trying to analyze it and determine what the need is. I don't think you have to go very far to determine what that need is.

What we need is some action. What we need is some action, and that action consists of some direct shelter building by this government. We need it in a lot of places and it should be done. And if we do it, that'll be a very good investment over a very long period of time for Manitobans. Taking a mortgage out on senior citizens' housing is a very wise thing for a province to do, especially when the population of that province is getting progressively older as time passes. And that's why investments in senior citizens' housing are very wise, but this government has chosen deliberately not to do that. They have deliberately chosen to shortchange those older people.

What we were told last year, we were told that the federal Liberals and the provincial Conservatives would get together, with a subsidy program to the private sector. We were told that quite clearly and quite specifically last year by the Provincial Minister of Housing. And frankly had that happened the Member for Fort Rouge wouldn't have to bring forward this resolution. But it's not happened because the Federal Government hasn't put up the money for it, and it's not happened because the Province hasn't asked. It's not happened at all. And the interesting thing is why haven't people put up the money? Everyone's trying to pass the housing buck to a different level of government. The Federal Government's been passing the buck to the Province, the Province passes it over to the City, the City passes it back to the Province, the Province passes it back up to the Federal Government. It goes around in a circle for a year-and-a-half, and who's been suffering? The people who have been suffering are the senior citizens and single parents talked about in this resolution. —(Interjection)— Well, you know, doom and gloom is necessary when it's true.

And if the Member for St. James doesn't think that we have a terrible picture with respect to housing, and if he's satisfied with what has taken place over the last year-and-a-half, then I think he should go out and talk to more of his constituents and find out that they aren't satisfied with what's happened with respect to senior citizens housing. He can go to the senior citizens housing projects that exist right now, and ask them how many people are waiting and ask them how long the waiting lines are, and ask them how long it will take for people waiting to get into senior citizens housing to actually get into that housing and he'll find that the waiting lists range as high as four years. And what's going to happen with those people? I think, and this is rather ghoulish, but I think that the Minister is almost trying to outwait these senior citizens so he doesn't have to have a problem. He'll outwait them so the waiting lists will go down. But we've had no housing been built and that verges on the criminal, especially for the senior citizens because they have nowhere else to turn and nowhere else to go.

You know we've had a cutback of federal funds for housing, but we've not really had a cutback of federal subsidies for housing. It's just that the subsidies have gone to other people, and they've not gone to meet the needs of the senior citizens in lower income families. We've had federal subsidies, not for the poor, not for the needy, but for the rich. And we do have an oversupply of MURBs, we do have an oversupply of what's called Multiple Urban Residential Buildings, and all this has happened because the Federal Government has set up a system of tax deferrals for wealthy people. They wanted wealthy lawyers, wealthy doctors, to invest in MURBs. Everyone runs around trying to sell people tax-shelter housing. Get out of paying taxes now, put money into one of these tax shelters that are being built by a private developer. They don't really care if these units are vacant in the first period of their existence, they don't care if they lose money because if you're in the 75 percent tax bracket it's a good thing possibly, to lose some money over a short run and get a capital gains in five years.

So if you take a look at the statistics you'll find that we've had an over supply of tax-shelter housing built in Winnipeg, that this tax-shelter housing is fairly expensive, and that it's primarily located on the fringe; that there are vacancy rates of 15, 20 and 30 percent for some of this tax-shelter housing. And that's happened because of horribly ill-conceived federal policies with respect to tax dodges.

Yet, had they taken that money that they've allowed to slip away from the public treasury

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

**MR. PARASIUK:** . . . because of this tax dodge scheme, and rather turn that money into the senior citizens housing programs, that they cut the funds off for, then we wouldn't have the type of problem that we have right now. It wouldn't be nearly as profound as it is right now.

If we want to look at this particular resolution and what it does in terms of subsidies, we find that what it'll do, it'll subsidize the refinancing of privately constructed apartments. If the public builds a unit for \$200,000 to house say, 10 people, that \$200,000 cost is amortized in the rents, and that's all that's amortized with respect to that construction. If a private developer builds an apartment for \$200,000 for ten people, that \$200,000 is originally amortized in the rent, but then what happens when that entrepreneur sells it to someone else for \$300,000, no improvements to

the facility, just a capital gain \$300,000 because of inflation? We then have to amortize \$300,000 in the rents. What happens if that person then sells it again to someone for \$400,000? We then have to amortize the \$400,000 into the rent. So then what do we start getting? We start getting a subsidy of refinancing. And this resolution, the way it's worded doesn't provide a lid on this type of subsidy. It's an open-ended type of subsidy. It's a horribly expensive type of subsidy, and it doesn't deal with the problem. It certainly isn't comprehensive enough and it won't deal with the problem that people have.

All it will do is provide a subsidy to landlords who refinance their buildings. And in the short run there may be some short-term advantages to it, when you compare the construction costs of a new building, publicly built, to that of a private building that's been built about 10 years ago. But over the life of a building, which is 40 or 50 years, and there's refinance of the private building, you will find that the present program that exists of the public building senior citizens housing and low-income housing is by far the cheapest system. So let's not try and fool people when we talk about what's going to be more expensive in terms of a subsidy program. Let's understand that this program, as proposed, is going to be far more expensive than what exists right now.

And, Mr. Speaker, what's important is for us not to deal with just a little program like this, but rather to deal with a comprehensive program dealing with the supply problems in housing, and also to develop a comprehensive program dealing with the income problems of impoverished Manitobans, who can't afford housing. And that, Mr. Speaker, we will do at the appropriate time in the discussion of this resolution, but for now we will vote against the amendment and we will be voting against this resolution because it's insufficient and it won't deal with the problem.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Are you ready for the question? The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

**MR. AXWORTHY:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't want to monopolize the time of the House. I'd hoped perhaps other members would respond but I do think that the comments from the Member for Transcona deserve some degree of response. One of the flaws of the Member for Transcona since he's come into the House I've discovered is that he isn't able to raise the level of his gaze above the groin. He doesn't really have a sense of being able to approach a problem in other than in a totally sort of noxious sort of way, a politically noxious way, I'm not thinking any other way. There's another problem too, Mr. Speaker, but that's one that's not totally unknown to other members of the House, is he doesn't allow himself to get confused by the facts. In fact, he works the other way around. He sort of tends to get confused by not talking about the facts, but that's something that I am sure he and his colleagues can work out as they go through their own perambulations over the next several months. What he simply said though in some cases was absolutely false and untrue, and in fact deliberately distorted. And it's unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, that in a debate like this, in Private Members' Hour, that we have to resort to cheap tricks in order to make the point, because that's all it is. It's when you deliberately distort and deliberately mislead then it is a cheap trick, it's not really dealing very honestly or very fairly in a debate. And that's unfortunate because I don't think that's really required under these circumstances.

Let me just illustrate, Mr. Speaker, how the member has done that, just simply so we have the record clear. He says that the Federal Government has withdrawn from the housing field, that's not true. It has changed its program. He wasn't listening very clearly when we said that the changes, that they have adjusted the form of subsidy to non-profit social housing, in which the capital is lent privately, but the government will then subsidize not a private developer but a non-profit sponsor. A church, that is obviously some form of evil private enterprise organization. Maybe a community organization, maybe a neighbourhood group is another one of those evil people that the Member for Transcona can't stand because they somehow don't fit his ideological framework, that are not government-owned, government-run, government-managed housing operators. That seems to be his problem, Mr. Speaker. Is it unless, unless you fit the strict category of being sort of state-controlled and state-operated and state-run, everything else beyond that purview just doesn't have any value, or doesn't have any esteem in the eyes of the Member for Transcona.

And that's what is ironic, Mr. Speaker, talk about irony. This member, who was a sort of junior G-man in the NDP government before, one of the sort of whiz-kids, sort of up there in the Management Committee, making all the decisions, is now arguing for a comprehensive housing program. Well, my question, Mr. Speaker, where was he when the NDP should have been doing a comprehensive housing program? Where was he when the time was called? Where was he when the debates were raised in this House saying, "Let's have a comprehensive supply program?" Where he was was simply tacking down his particular ideological fixation of public housing, that's where he was. And that's the only place he was. Because this government, in comparison to every other government, including at the time NDP governments in Saskatchewan and British Columbia, who were in government at the same time as this government, rejected any other alternative. The Barrett

government, the New Democratic government in British Columbia, said there are alternative ways of doing it. We provide some public housing in the areas where it's needed. We sponsor non-profit organizations where it's needed. We provide some assistance to the private markets where it's needed. The same thing was taking place in Saskatchewan, same thing other governments do, but this was the only government, which really sort of had this kind of fixed commitment.

And so when members of this House were arguing, going back all the way to 1972 and 1973 for a comprehensive supply program, this was a government that refused to provide it, or their government refused to provide. Now we've got a change of mind, which I am glad to see, but it's too late, Mr. Speaker. It's too late for all of a sudden these changes of mind, sort of midstream. Because you can't get let off the hook of your history. I mean, members of this House, this is the greatest historical debating society I've ever witnessed, I mean, we spend more time talking about what's happened over the past 10 years than the Manitoba Historical Society does. So I think the Member for Transcona should learn a little history about where he was, and his colleagues were in terms of their housing program because it wasn't that hot. And frankly, Mr. Speaker, it was becoming very expensive. And all levels of government were having to come to one conclusion. And that is how do you balance off costs against need? How do you get the proper formula that would ensure that you would still provide some commitment to satisfy needs, but at the same time not impoverish public purses and bankrupt your capacity to raise capital.

And, of course, what he really also ignored in his remarks as he was lambasting other parties, is that who was providing the capital for the public housing program of the NDP? Where did 90 percent of the capital come from and where did 50 percent of the subsidy costs come from? Those nasty Liberals in Ottawa. Boy, oh boy, I mean those guys who couldn't care less. Where was 90 percent of the capital coming — from their Treasury, and where was 50 percent of the costs coming — from their Treasury. We didn't hear it at the time, I mean every time those ribbons were being cut there was faint reference that there was somebody out there helping to pay for it. It was the great NDP program at the time, but they refuse to recognize it now and the fact of the matter is that it was a joint effort; it was a shared responsibility.

And what all governments have done, including representatives of the previous government, when they were recognized, is that the Annual Subsidy Bill to the Public Housing Construction Program, was getting to be highly expensive and exorbitant and alternatives had to be found. And that was one conclusion that Housing Ministers right across this country came to a recognition of. So there had to be a way found of putting some cap on those subsidy costs. And one of those ways of doing it, an alternative that was found was to provide for the technique and device of allowing the capital to be supplied from the private market, but the subsidy interest rates to be written down to one or two percent.

Now, is that a give-away somehow, is that a give-away particularly when the only sponsorship is Provincial Governments or Municipal Governments or non-profit groups or co-ops? Those nasty sort of people that the Member for Transcona didn't like at all. But we're talking about a social housing program because I'm going to get to his little comment about the MURBs in a minute because I think all it displayed was his ignorance of the housing market, frankly. What that subsidy was simply doing was providing a basis of introducing shelter into the market by using someone else's capital, and using your money to get a lower subsidy rate. And I think I provided him figures. If he wants we can table the documents, which would show that the comparative subsidy cost a month is about \$120 differential, which adds up to several million dollars a year, and that is true over the life of the project, not over the first three or four years. Because the Non-Profit Social Housing Program has the same fixed costs and where the bulge in housing costs now appear is not in the Capital construction costs; it is in things like Hydro and maintenance, and manpower and costs which are not associated with the building.

And if he was as close as student of housing as he likes to think he is, he would realize that in the last few years the substantial increase in public housing rents have had to go up simply to maintain their level with those costs. That's been where the push has been; that's where the inflationary influence comes from, not in the Capital construction side of it.

So, Mr. Speaker, when he throws these figures around, I think he'd better be a lot more careful than he is, because they simply aren't true. —(Interjection)— Well, whatever his reasons; I suppose he has his own motives, which I'm not here to question. But I do think he should tend to stick closer to what's going on.

Now, the logical alternative is either this: Either, as I heard him say it, that the NDP are going to vote against this, first because they say, "Well, there may be a need there but we're not going to satisfy that need right away; we want this comprehensive housing program that we were unable to provide when we were in government. So let somebody else do it." So we won't provide any substantial income supplement for those who have needs. I would suggest to him that if he thinks he is so close to his constituents, that he go and ask some of the people in his riding, who happen

to be paying 40 percent of their income presently for housing, whether they are prepared to wait for the NDP to develop its comprehensive housing program in the year 2020 or whatever it may be. Ask them if they are prepared to wait for that as the alternative, or ask them if they are saying, "Well, do you know your money has been going to some private landlord? You shouldn't be feeding those capitalists." Or are you prepared to say that at this present point in time we would like you to be able to stay in your own home or in your own apartment and not be forced to move into substandard accommodation because you can no longer afford to stay there. Because if he hasn't any people in his constituency, I have got hundreds in mine and I will be quite glad to introduce them to him anytime he asks. —(Interjection)— Whatever it may be. That happens to be the problem, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please. The hour allotted to Private Members' Hour having expired, the next time this matter comes up on the Order Paper the Member for Fort Rouge will have 10 minutes left.

**MR. AXWORTHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hour being 5:30, the House is accordingly adjourned and stands adjourned until 2:30 tomorrow afternoon. (Thursday)