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DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, April 9, 1979

Time: 2:30 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER by MR. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. Harry E. Graham (Birtle-Russell): Before we proceed, I should like to draw the honourable members' attention to the gallery on my left, where we have 35 visitors from the First Presbyterian Church of Sioux Falls, United States, under the direction of Mr. Kaminski.

We also have 100 students of Grade 9 standing from Burrows Isaac Newton School. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Burrows.

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

Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . .

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Tourism.

HON. NORMA L. PRICE (Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table the Annual Report of the Centre Culturel Franco-Manitobain for 1977-78.

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. HOWARD PAWLEY, Leader of the Opposition (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Agriculture. Can the Minister of Agriculture confirm that in fact lands are being sold by the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation without the referral of those sales to the Land Acquisition Branch for their approval, and the Land Value Appraisal Commission.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. JAMES E. DOWNEY (Arthur): Mr. Speaker, for the information of the Leader of the Opposition, the point which he raises is being discussed in the Estimates at this time, and would be quite happy to answer that question in Estimates. And, Mr. Speaker, I have quite a bit of information to provide for him and his members in the Estimates today.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, a question to the Attorney-General. Could the Attorney-General advise whether or not he has examined the sale of land through the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation without reference to the Land Value Appraisal Commission in order to determine whether such is legal or not?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. GERALD W.J. MERCIER (Osborne): No, I have not, Mr. Speaker. I believe the Corporation has their own solicitor that they retain.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. SIDNEY GREEN (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address a question to the Honourable the Minister of Agriculture. Can the Minister of Agriculture advise me whether it is the design of his program to eliminate from people who wish to farm in the Province of Manitoba one option; namely,

the option to farm on land rented from the public so that they could live on the income of the land rather than have it all invested so that they can live poor and die rich.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Well, in case the honourable member, Mr. Speaker, from Inkster, wasn't listening to what I said previously, that I will be answering questions in my Estimates in this particular matter with MACC and I'm sure that there will be lots of information, and I also invite him into the Committee Room to hear some of the things that are to be said this afternoon and for his friend who is sitting next to him.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that we have two Committees and that we aren't able to be in all places at one time, and in view of the fact that this is the Question Period, would the Honourable Minister advise me whether, if not by design, the effect of having all public lands turned over to private people will mean that a freedom has been taken away from the farmers of the Province of Manitoba; namely, the option of being able to rent public lands at the uninflated price so that they can live on the income of the land rather than having it invested in higher prices of land?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, again the individual is bringing forward a hypothetical question and I'm not prepared to deal with hypothetical questions, but we are prepared to deal with fact and I would say, Mr. Speaker, that the program that is now in place in Manitoba enables the young people of Manitoba to continue farming and invest in their land as free Manitoban agricultural people.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, may I ask whether at the conclusion of the Honourable Minister's program of divesting the public of Manitoba of lands belonging to them and turning them over to private people, whether a farmer in the Province of Manitoba will have available to him the option — the option of renting land from the public at the uninflated value of that land which is likely to occur over the next few years as it occurred over the past few years?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the member across the way was in Cabinet when the program was put in place, and he's also of a legal profession who should understand that when individuals do have a lease or a contract that it is binding, and that individuals who have bought under the land-lease program have the option to purchase or to continue leasing, which has been in place from the time of his government and continuing. So Mr. Speaker, I would say that he should be well-informed of that and there aren't any changes, and if he's being misinformed by the Member for Lac du Bonnet it's nothing new than what we've already seen in Committee.

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

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, will the Minister confirm that many of the lands which are owned by all of the people in this Chamber as representing the people of Manitoba which have been turned over to some private people at less than their market value were not as a result of farmers exercising their option, but as a result of the Minister disposing of Crown lands?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, I again go back to the Estimates. I think it would be quite an appropriate place to discuss this, but as far as the member bringing forward the point, they are lands that are surplus to the Corporation. They aren't lands that are leased at this particular time. There is public open tender held on all properties that is being disposed of by the province.

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

MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. In view of the fact that the Honourable Minister says that they are surplus to the Corporation, did the Honourable Honourable Minister at any time consider making these lands available to farmers on a rental basis on the basis of their acquired value price so that farmers could rent land at uninflated prices and live off the income rather than seeing it being invested in land, and was that option made available?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, again I'll say that the lands that are being sold are lands that are surplus, that do not have leases on them and are being sold subject to the reserve bid which I've said many times, the reserve bid being the cost to the corporation plus all carrying costs.

Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to say that the total, the total which was an appraisal done by them of the parcels sold, the bid price that was received for the Province of Manitoba exceeded any appraised price that they had on them.

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

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, will the minister answer to the people of the Province of Manitoba whether he made available to any farmers the option of leasing that very same land?

MR. DOWNEY: Well, Mr. Speaker, the farmers of the province, in most cases, were leasing that land and had given those leases up.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. RUSSELL DOERN: I would direct a question to the Minister of Health related to the escape of five prisoners at Headingley Jail over the weekend. Is the present staff complement sufficient to control and contain the prison population at Headingley?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L. R. (Bud) SHERMAN (Fort Garry): It's my understanding that it is, Mr. Speaker, and that the present inmate population at Headingley is not excessive in comparative terms with recent years.

MR. DOE: Mr. Speaker, I would ask the minister whether he's undertaking any concrete steps to reduce the prison population at Headingley, for example, in the construction of a new wing?

MR. SHERMAN: Not in that form, Mr. Speaker, but we are certainly looking to the new correctional institution coming onstream in Brandon to accommodate some inmates from Headingley. What the precise number will be, I can't say, but there will be some transferred.

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

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, then I would direct a question to the Minister of Government Services before he leaves for that big, barless prison in eastern Canada and ask him when we can expect to see the Brandon Jail opened?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

HON. SIDNEY SPIVAK (River Heights): Mr. Speaker. Soon.

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the Day. The Honourable Member for St. Vital.

MR. D. JAMES WALDING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Honourable Minister reporting for Manitoba Hydro. I'd like to ask the minister whether Manitoba Hydro pays membership fees in any organizations primarily of a social, recreational, or fraternal nature?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. DONALD W. CRAIK (Riel): Well, Mr. Speaker, Manitoba Hydro may well; there hasn't been any instruction for them not to, if that's the case and unless the member wants to make his question more specific it would be difficult to enquire to find out the answer for him.

MR. WALDING: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister inform the House whether he is satisfied that the 1973 policy regulation would allow Hydro to purchase memberships in the Manitoba Club?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, it would be helpful if the member would indicate what 1973 regulation he is referring to in his question.

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

MR. WALDING: For clarification, Mr. Speaker, I believe it was clarified at Question Period Thursday or Friday of last week. A 1973 policy regulation which says, "no membership fees will be paid from public funds, where the organization is primarily of a social, recreational, or fraternal nature." Is the Minister satisfied that that would not cover Manitoba Hydro purchasing an annual subscription for one of its employees in the Manitoba Club?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I think there are two questions involved here and I think perhaps we'd better separate them. I think perhaps the member first is asking whether the regulation in question applies to the Crown Corporations; and secondly, if it does, are there any memberships that fall under that. And in that case, I'll attempt to inquire on his behalf with regard to that. I assume it's Section 73, or 1973 Regulations under The Financial Administration Act. Is that correct? Yes.

MR. WALDING: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister confirm that as recently as February of this year, Manitoba Hydro paid \$500 as an entrance fee and \$562.50 annual dues for one of its senior employees?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I presume that that would be contained in the first question. If he's asking whether I'm aware of it or not, I would not be aware of it. Certainly they would not, I assume, ask the Minister about whether or not they were to join a particular organization or not.

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

MR. WALDING: Yes, Mr. Speaker, it becomes a matter of government policy, and I'm asking the Minister whether he is content to let Manitoba Hydro make policy in such matters, or whether the government should be the agency which makes policy in matters of this nature.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, it goes back to the first question. I seriously doubt that that particular 1973 regulation applies to the Crown Corporations, but perhaps it does. I'll inquire about that first.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Logan.

MR. WILLIAM JENKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Labour. When the Minister of Labour tabled the Lead-in-Blood Report on Weston and Lord Nelson Schools, would he also consider tabling the Letters of Transmittal and the recommendations that were made for that report.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. KEN MacMASTER (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, I'll see if I can dig out the documents that the member is talking about.

MR. JENKINS: Yes, also a further supplementary to the Minister. Can the Minister inform us if he has set up a meeting with the Parents' Association at Weston School with regard to the proposed blood-in level testing that is going to be taking place in the near future?

MR. MacMASTER: I believe I said in the House last week, Mr. Speaker, the procedure that we'd follow would be to meet with the school boards, principals, teachers and the parents in due time, which I expect to take place in a short period of time, being the next very few weeks.

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

MR. JENKINS: This question, Mr. Speaker, is to the Minister of Government Services. Could the Minister confirm, has he received a letter from the town council of the town of Gimli with regard to the rumour that seems to be circulating that the Public Works Department is considering the possibility of tearing up the runways at the Gimli Industrial Park, and the town is very concerned that these runways remain. Can the minister confirm if he has received a letter?

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, I'll take that question as notice and provide the information for the honourable member. There has been in fact, correspondence relating to the issue that has been

raised, whether it was only from the Town of Gimli or not I'm not sure, and I will try and obtain that information for him.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Finance. Does the Minister of Finance consider that his government has the same power as did Duff Roblin's government in 1966 to 1969 when Mr. Roblin commendably directed all government departments and Crown Corporations that they are not to have memberships in the Manitoba Club?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Well, Mr. Speaker, the question surely is whether this regulation in the Manual of Administration applies to the Crown Corporations, and that is the base question. If it does not apply and the Crown Corporations choose to join the Manitoba Club, the Carleton Club, any other club, then, Mr. Speaker, that is their business, that's why we appoint Boards of Directors of these Crown Corporations. So, Mr. Speaker, if it's not governed by that particular clause, it's fully within their powers as far as I am concerned to do it, but I said I would check and I'd find out.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I believe that I erred in the time period; it wasn't 1966 to 1969, but 1962 to 1966. Would the honourable member see whether Duff Roblin's directive in that respect, which applied to everybody, has ever been nullified, insofar as the Crown Corporations that he's referring to are concerned?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I'll have to ask the member specifically, is he referring to one particular club or is he talking about the general clause raised by the Member for St. Vital?

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I do not know what happens generally, but I do know that Duff Roblin specifically mentioned the Manitoba Club, as one which, "Agencies under the power of the Government of Manitoba, were not to be members of."

MR. CRAIK: Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't think there's any real further question to answer. It's a question to the government as to whether or not the clause actually covers the Crown Corporations. If the member is asking the question quite apart from that, whether this government is going to instruct a Crown Corporation that it cannot belong, he's narrowed it down now to one particular club, and I would have to say that there's nothing in my knowledge as to why that particular club should be singled out from any other club in the City of Winnipeg or the Province of Manitoba.

MR. GREEN: Well, Mr. Speaker, could the honourable minister then ask me why Duff Roblin commendably singled out that club, as being not a club which the Manitoba Government would have its members or any of its agencies belong to?

MR. CRAIK: No. 1, Mr. Speaker, like the Member for Inkster, I came into this Legislature in 1966, he's referring to 1962-1966. I don't suppose he really expects me to be able to recall what may have gone on in that period of time. Secondly, even if I had been here, Mr. Speaker, I don't think I would have taken it as being a very serious matter, whether they belonged or didn't belong.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further question to the Minister of Finance. Is the Minister of Finance indicating that, although it may not be proper for departments of government to be members of social or fraternal clubs or organizations, that it's entirely all right, entirely discretionary as to whether crown corporations be members of social or fraternal clubs.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, that's precisely, I think, what one of the first questions asked from the member for St. Vital. Certainly I have never considered it sufficiently important matter to specifically scrutinize the operations of Manitoba Hydro for instance, to find out whether or not they belong to a particular club. There are far more important things than that, that the corporation has to deal with vis-a-vis the government than that.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Finance, does the Minister of Finance consider it sufficiently important that the Crown Corporations in the province do comply with the Manual of Administration if the Manual of Administration in fact does apply to them?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition is right on the question when he says if, and that of course is the first question we'll find out.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. LEONARD EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address the question to the Minister of Labour and Manpower, and ask the minister whether the advertisement that appeared in the Winnipeg papers of Saturday, April 7th, pertaining to hiring in his department, a position entitled: Demographer, Department of Labour and Manpower, requires a person to undertake casual analysis to identify the reasons for population shifts and predict future trends, includes analyzing Federal and Provincial policies for their demographic implications, analyzing immigration data, developing demographic policy objectives and working with the Manitoba Bureau of Statistics? My question to the honourable minister is, is this particular position a new position in his department and if so, why?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. MacMASTER: I haven't read the advertisement, Mr. Speaker.

MR. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, is the Minister advising us when he said he hasn't read the advertisement, is he not advising us that he has not authorized the hiring of an additional person, or the establishment of a new position in his Department? Is he not aware of this particular position which is a policy advisory position?

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I didn't say I wasn't aware of the position, I said I hadn't read the the article, I don't know if there is something in the particular article that's of concern to the member or not.

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

MR. EVANS: Well my specific question to the minister, which I placed in the first instance was, is this a new position established in his department for this purpose?

MR. MacMASTER: From what I can recall of the description it was apparently in the classification, yes.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon East with a fourth question.

MR. EVANS: Since this is then a new position, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the minister could indicate whether this indicates that the government of Manitoba lacks confidence in the forecasts, as well as the current surveys already conducted at the taxpayers expense by Statistics Canada, not only for Manitoba but for every province in Canada. Does this indicate that the government lacks confidence in those forecasts and current surveys done by Statistics Canada on population trends?

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I always believe that a better job could be done, and this also very timely ties in with the opportunity for the aged within the province that we're trying to look at now. We're with that particular situation which was mentioned in the Throne Speech.

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

MR. EVANS: Specifically in the advertisement, Mr. Speaker, I would draw the Minister's attention to the reference to the statement which states "developing demographic policy objectives" — developing demographic policy objectives. Does this indicate, Mr. Speaker, that the Government of Manitoba has not yet arrived at any demographic policy objectives? Does it not have any objectives in mind as to what the population of Manitoba should be?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. MacMASTER: I think the object of filling the particular position is to assist the government and make it more knowledgeable, and assist the members of the opposition, and make us all more knowledgeable of the movement within the province and out of the province and into the province of all peoples, and it can certainly service in good stead within the province and complement other provinces who are doing exactly the same thing, along with the federal government. I think it's a very responsible move, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, I have the information requested by the Honourable Member for Logan, and I think I could furnish it to him at this time. There is no plan to dismantle the runway at this time. A letter was received from the Town of Gimli enquiring as to whether the runway was to be abandoned. There is a consultant's report that the government has, which indicates that if there is no long-term tenant to be found, that that consideration should be contemplated. However, the runway maintenance is a minimal cost at present, and it will be maintained.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Telephone System. Is it the policy of the Manitoba Telephone System to get their promotional pieces of literature that are sometimes enclosed in MTS billings printed in Manitoba?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister responsible for Manitoba Telephones.

HON. EDWARD MCGILL (Brandon West): Mr. Speaker, I would gather that the Member for Transcona has a specific piece of printing in mind. If he would care to let me have a copy of it, I can discuss that specific with the member.

MR. PARASIUK: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'd like the Minister to investigate why the promotional piece on Trendline Extension Phones, which has the Manitoba Telephone System logo on it, and which was enclosed in the February MTS billings, was printed in the United States?

MR. MCGILL: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'd be glad to check that out for the member, and it's quite possible that such kinds of promotional literature related to a specific kind of material that was being offered for sale.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Wellington

MR. BRIAN CORRIN: Yes, my question, Mr. Speaker, is for the Honourable Attorney-General. Will the Attorney-General take immediate steps to ensure that the City of Winnipeg Police Officials rescind their present policy denying criminal suspects access to lawyers during their questioning procedures?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, the question is based on the premise that that is the policy. It would appear from media reports that I've read that that is in dispute. This matter has arisen as a result of the enquiry which we have directed to be held by the Manitoba Police Commission into the general activities of the Winnipeg Police Department, and, Mr. Speaker, I will await the completion of the hearing and the report of the Manitoba Police Commission before taking any steps in this area.

MR. CORRIN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would ask the Honourable Attorney-General if he is aware, notwithstanding that he says this is a matter of dispute, is he aware that Detective Sergeant Robert Bird, of the City of Winnipeg Police Department, testifying at these hearings, was reported in two Winnipeg newspapers as saying that a demand for legal counsel in such circumstances as I have related would not be granted immediately, because it may interfere with the investigation? Is he aware that the detective sergeant of the force in question gave that testimony, and I would ask him whether he is motivated to safeguard the rights of accused, as is provided by the Bill of

Rights, in the light of those remarks and comments?

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I can only reiterate what I said in reply to the first question. We have directed the enquiry to be held with respect to this matter. This is one of the general areas that has been reviewed by the Police Commission, and I intend to await the completion of their hearing and their report before any steps are taken.

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

MR. CORRIN: Mr. Speaker, is the Honourable Attorney-General aware that the Canadian Bill of Rights specifically declares, and I'm reading from it, that "no law of Canada shall be construed or applied so as to deprive a person who has been arrested or detained of the right to retain and instruct counsel without delay". Is the Honourable Attorney-General aware of that, and in the light of that, if he is aware of that — and I presume he is, because he's a learned counsel himself — I would ask him to consider whether I have not asked him simply to augment the hearing procedures now under way as opposed to preempting them? I've simply asked him to assure the public, and I would ask him whether he wouldn't agree that I've simply asked him to assure the public that there will be no further breaches of the Canadian Bill of Rights pending the determination of this hearing before the Commission?

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

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Urban Affairs, and ask him whether there will be a provincial commitment regarding arena expansion before May 22nd?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, we met with the official delegation of the city on Friday afternoon and discussed this subject. The City of Winnipeg officials have written to the federal minister requesting a written commitment from the federal government, which they have not yet received. When they receive that commitment, we will then meet again to discuss this particular issue.

MR. DOERN: I would ask the Minister if the problem is the terms of reference, or is it a case of the province waiting for the federal government to commit, and the federal government waiting for the province to commit?

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, the essential question to be confirmed is whether or not the federal government would recognize the City of Winnipeg's guarantee of expenditures by the Winnipeg Enterprises Corporation of \$3.5 million — whether that would be recognized as the City of Winnipeg's contribution towards the expansion.

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

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I would then ask the Minister, if a commitment by the province would likely bring about a federal commitment, because if so, that appears to be the problem. I refer to the remarks of the Deputy Mayor, Bill Norrie, who says "If a commitment by the province is not obtained before May 22nd, then the money from Ottawa may be lost".

MR. MERCIER: Well, Mr. Speaker, I think those words were taken out of context. If he is saying that after May 22nd we will no longer have a federal government by the Liberal Party, then he is no doubt quite correct. But with respect to what happens after that, I think the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party has indicated that the construction of arenas would be considered on a project-by-project basis.

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

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Minister this, then. If the province gives a commitment now and the federal government gives a commitment now, that will bind any government after May 22nd. So I'm saying, is he awaiting the results of the federal election, or . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. May I suggest to the honourable member that his question is

The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. DOERN: May I rephrase my question?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member has had two supplementary questions already.—(Interjection)— The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: I would ask the Minister again, will he commit his government prior to May 22nd?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, we would like to deal with this issue as soon as possible, but surely to goodness it is reasonable for the city officials to ask for a letter from the Minister confirming an offer reported through the media. Surely that's not unreasonable.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. RONALD McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question of the Minister of Government Services while he's still in this arena. Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister of Government Services could indicate when a decision will be made to proceed with the proposed construction of a correctional facility and court house at The Pas?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, I believe that the Honourable Minister of Health and Social Development has confirmed that the matter will be proceeded with. The timing and staging will be announced shortly. There are two elements to the facilities, one was a correctional institute and one was a provincial judges' court. It is contemplated that a correctional institute will be built, a provincial judges' court will not be built, but rather, either existing premises now owned by the government will be renovated to provide the facility, or in turn, Mr. Speaker, there will be a new facility leased or bought which will be converted to a provincial judges' court.

I recognize that there has been a delay in this matter and some concern, but Mr. Speaker, the purpose of dealing with this length was for the purpose of saving money, and it is contemplated, Mr. Speaker, that as a result of this procedure, there will be a \$2 million saving for the taxpayer.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, without accepting the Minister's assumption, I think it would be more fair to say that there is a \$2 million increase because of the delay in the construction of the facilities. But Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister if his absence from Cabinet had anything to do with the original proposal prepared by himself and his colleague for that original proposal being rejected by Cabinet and sending the department back to square one in this matter?

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, the easiest thing on this side would have been to have simply accepted the former government's position and proceeded with the construction. The problem was, Mr. Speaker, the deficit position we inherited warranted some recognition that there had to be re-examination of what was proposed. What is proposed, Mr. Speaker, is a contemplated construction which will provide what was originally requested and required, and in the course of it, Mr. Speaker, it will save the taxpayer money, and I believe that the \$2 million figure will in fact be met. That is the saving.

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

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister could give us an indication of what date this decision to proceed, to call tenders, which had already been called, to let contracts which were already let, by what date does he perceive his government making that decision?

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, I indicated that the scheduling would be announced shortly, and I would simply ask the honourable member to wait until that is announced.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to follow up on that question and ask the Minister whether he has retained a new architect and/or engineer to commence the redesign.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, at the present time, the former architects are the ones which the department is working with. There has been internal work completed by the Design Service Branch of the department. The proposals are part and parcel of work that has been completed within the department, that is internally, and with the assistance of the architects who originally were hired by the previous government.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Minister how he can anticipate a saving when he has four additional cost factors that were not in evidence when our government was in power, namely

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. May I suggest to the honourable member, his questions are argumentative. The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Minister whether he is not considering, in his calculation, the following factors: (1) That construction costs have escalated 25 percent, (2) that he's facing a lawsuit at The Pas, (3) that he will have to pay architects more for a redesign, and (4) that he will have to have two separate services for heating and lighting, etc., whereas before we had a complex which was serviced by a common core. In view of that, how can he talk about a saving?

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, on the provincial judges' court, there is an estimated saving of \$1 million because we are not building that facility, Mr. Speaker, and therefore that is part and half of what was proposed. With respect to the other saving, there are cost savings that are believed to be real; I recognize that there is a lawsuit at the present time which may warrant some expenditure or some cost by the provincial government, but I suggest as well that the estimate with respect to what a new tendering would cost at this point, is not correct. And I believe that the recommendations and the information that's been furnished, both internally and externally, would justify the optimistic belief that there will be the savings that we referred to. The honourable member may not like that information, and the honourable members opposite would like to quarrel with it, but that is the contemplated figure, Mr. Speaker, as a result of the re-examination of the facilities and of the provincial judges' court. There should be and will be, in our belief, a saving of approximately \$2 million to the taxpayer.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood with one final question.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, does the Minister recognize that even if what he says is true, that the government also spent \$2 million more in Brandon to build the Brandon Correctional?

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the Day. The hour for Question Period having expired, the Honourable Government House Leader.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

HON. WARNER H. JORGENSEN (Morris): Mr. Speaker, before calling Orders of the Day, as honourable members are aware, the House will not be sitting on Friday, and there seems to be a disposition on the part of most members, and I should like to have that confirmed, that we transfer the hours of sitting that would normally take place on Friday, to Thursday. If that is agreeable to my honourable friends, then that will be the order on business for Thursday.

I'd also say, Mr. Speaker, only one committee will be sitting this afternoon. I understand, Sir, that you have made previous arrangements for Room 254 for this afternoon, so the committee will be sitting there at 8:00 o'clock tonight.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, the arrangements indicated by the House Leader are satisfactory. I gather from what the House Leader is indicating then, that Agriculture will not be sitting in committee this afternoon, will not be sitting until this evening.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. JORGENSON: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Highways, that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

MOTION presented and carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee of Supply with the Honourable Member for Radisson in the Chair for the Department of Health and Community Services.

SUPPLY — HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

MR. CHAIRMAN, Mr. Abe Kovnats (Radisson): I would draw the honourable members' attention to Page 51 of the Main Estimates. We are on Resolution No. 65 in Health and Community Services. 4. Institutional Services, Item (d) Institutional Mental Retardation Services: (1) Salaries—pass — the Honourable Minister.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, just before we proceed I want to indicate for the members of the Committee and the Press and the Public that a newspaper story on Saturday contained an inaccuracy which has caused some concern among some people in the field of Mental Retardation in that it reported — one of the local Winnipeg newspapers reported that I had said that the government was considering installing Chief Executive Officers in the Manitoba School at Portage, at St. Amant, and at the Pelican Lake Training Centre, and I think, as members opposite will agree, that what we were talking about was Portage, Brandon, and Selkirk.

Over the weekend, as you can expect, Sir, I had a number of phone calls from people connected with St. Amant and Pelican Lake who were quite upset and I just want to reassure the Committee and the Press and the Public that what we were talking about is the three Provincial Hospitals — Brandon, Selkirk and Portage.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1) Salaries— pass — the Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, if the Minister could be just a — what is it that is being installed at the Public Institutions that you were concerned with about being in the paper?

MR. SHERMAN: Well, I had said during the introduction to my Estimates last month, and then when we were discussing this Item on Friday that, rather than having the Manitoba School at Portage, the Brandon Mental Health Centre and the Selkirk Mental Health Centre run by Medical Directors, we were looking at the concept of appointing Chief Executive Officers as in the manner of Public General Hospitals who would run the Institutions, to whom the Medical Director and other disciplinary directors would report.

Now, the way it got reported in one of the Winnipeg newspapers was that I said that about St. Amant and Pelican Lake and I didn't. I was talking about Brandon, Portage and Selkirk.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to first of all say I don't intend to try and recreate the atmosphere which this House closed this Committee with on Friday because I see no useful purpose in it even though there have been what I consider to be very unfair and completely unnecessary allegations made, that it is not my intention to redo that. When I got to my feet the other day I had no intentions of dealing with those questions. I wanted to deal specifically with exactly what the Minister has referred to; namely, the difference in the manner in which the department administers retardate care in the two different institutions, and I would like to know whether the figures are to be read as follows: Salaries and Other Expenditures of \$9.5 million and \$1.8 million to be the Homes which the department has direct custody over, and External Agencies to be \$6.7 million, being the entire expenses for those agencies which are run by private boards. Am I reading that correctly? Well, the Minister is nodding that I am reading that correctly.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I do have some concern here. Last year when the restraint went into effect with regard to the Public Institutions, I specifically asked the Minister whether that philosophy was to be carried forward to the private institutions, and at that time the Minister's answer was equivocal. He indicated that he could not — and I hope I'm not being unfair, and if I am, I want him to correct me — that he could not be as rapid in dealing with measures in the private institutions which were not under his control as he could be with dealing directly with those institutions, such as the Manitoba School, which are under his control, as a result of which it was my impression that the private

institutions were dealt with in a way which resulted in them not having to bear with some of the problems which took place in the Public institutions. Now, I would like to know whether the menus, the laundry, the other areas in which savings can be made, have been insisted upon with regard to the private institutions. I would like, Mr. Chairman, to deal with this but I'd like to know whether I'm in the right direction before I deal with it. Therefore, I'd like an answer to the question.

MR. SHERMAN: Well, yes, Mr. Chairman. I wasn't sure whether the honourable member was finished. He's addressing himself to the area that he discussed in committee last year, that of restraint or tight fiscal management and its application equitably across the system, both to public and private institutions and agencies. That is the proper area and I agree we have discussed it in the past. I'm prepared to address his question if he's putting the question, but I'm not sure that he's finished what he was going to ask me.

MR. GREEN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I asked him last year whether he was prepared to see to it that these institutional homes that are run by private people and who, quite often, during the period when I was minister, liked to look somewhat down on how the public ran its institutions but at the same time, asked for a 100 percent funding for the public to run its institutions, whether they were being put to the same stringent requirements such as the institutions which are directly under the care of the government, whether the food was being watched as closely, whether those things were being as stringently applied in the private area as they are in the public area. And I say that, Mr. Chairman, because I find that some people are very snobbish about this. They say we can do it better than the government; we don't want the government interfering with our affairs. Yes, we want the public to put up all the money, 100 percent, we want to be able to spend this money, but we think that governments cannot handle these things, and our place is so much better managed than that which is managed by the government.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I hope I'm not going to be asked if I attribute these remarks to any particular person. I attribute them to the kind of thing that I have been faced with as between private schools, public schools, private business, public business, private institutions, public institutions and I'm asking the minister whether the institution which he fully funds have been subjected to the same kind of problems because, Mr. Chairman, these figures don't show it. These figures, Mr. Chairman show that the public institutions went up in Expenditures from \$9.1 million to \$9.5 million and from \$1.7 million to \$1.8 million, which I figure out to be somewhat in the area of 4 percent increase in spending.

That the private institutions went up from \$6.3 million to \$6.7 million which, Mr. Chairman, is closer to 6 percent in spending. And if we want to use the kind of hyperbole that I get from the Conservative Party when they are talking about increase, the private institutions got 1.5 times more than the public institutions got. And, is this not, Mr. Chairman, the minister operating in such a way as to neglect the public institutions at the expense of the private institutions, because that's what the figures show. That's what it shows. 4 percent for the public homes, 6 percent for the private.

And they're all 100 percent public, because they're 100 percent publicly financed, and this government's tendency to run down anything that the public does on the basis that the private sector does it better has done, or appears to be doing the same kind of thing with the retardate institutions under its care, with the result that, if you walk into the Portage Home, you find that there are all kinds of deficiencies, all kinds of problems and, Mr. Chairman, I'm not going to attribute this to any particular government. I can tell you that the first time I went into the Portage Institution that I came out willing to increase taxes by 1 percent to do something for that Institution, and I'm sure that the minister has had the same experience, that nobody is going to claim a monopoly on feeling for the people involved.

But I was told, and I was not happy to hear it, that there is much more leniency in dealing with public institutions budgets when they came in and asked for their money than there was in dealing with your own administration. Mr. Chairman your own administration is in there battling away to try to do a job. Dr. Chandler was the Assistant Deputy in charge of those institutions at that time and he did what any good civil servant would do. He said "We would like to do better for these people. There are many areas in which funds should be expended." And, at that time, we also funded a new building at St. Amant, I believe — am I improperly recalling? — but I remember that there was a Capital Building at St. Amant that we were talking about funding, but the complaint was made to me, Mr. Chairman, that with our own administrators, they are called in, they are raked over the coals, every piece of clothing that they buy, every expenditure that is made, is thoroughly gone through and the public institution comes in and says "Here is a reasonable budget", and yes, there are attempts to prune it, but the government finds it much more difficult to say "No" to a private Board than it says "No" to its own civil servant. And that's borne out, Mr. Chairman

by these figures, because if 6 percent was given to the public institutions, they would have gone up by, I would think, in the neighborhood of \$200,000 more than they have gone up.

But 6 percent was given to the private sector institution. Now Mr. Chairman, I can't, I can't

MR. DESJARDINS: 2 percent for Portage increase.

MR. GREEN: Portage was 2 percent? Well, I've taken, you see I've taken 91 to 95 and 1.7 to 1.8 and I get 91 to 95 is roughly 4 percent. \$9.1 million to \$9.5 million is roughly 4 percent, you can't argue that.

MR. DESJARDINS: You've got other expenditures as part of that.

MR. GREEN: I understand that, Mr. Chairman. And then when you take the other expenditures, it's less than perhaps 2 percent, but the total, the global for the public institutions would be in the ballpark at 4 percent. The global for the private institutions is 6 percent. If you took the public institutions and made it 6 percent, there are \$200,000 more, Mr. Chairman. Now, there are two people sitting in front of you who will tell you better than I what you can do with \$200,000 more, but there is \$200,000 that the public institutions are being shortchanged as against the private institutions, and that \$200,000 could be used in various ways.

It could be used for nicer clothing, it could be used for additional staff, it could be used for improving fire safety standards, it could be used for more laundry, it could be used for toys, it could be used for bedding, it could be used for a strip of bacon, it could be used in countless ways, and I'm not the one who's going to be able to say how it should be used. What I am saying is that if my calculations are correct and they are correct, and I asked the minister at the beginning whether there is some explanation for this — it's like I said before, in Winnipeg, the City of Winnipeg taxes, 4 mills for the rich, 7 mills for the poor. Public funding of institutions, 4 percent for the public sector, 6 percent for the private sector in the periods of restraint. Why?

The \$200,000 that they are being shortchanged in this area, are the retardates at those homes not entitled to that consideration? And, Mr. Chairman, there is a discrepancy in the percentage figures. I believe that that discrepancy goes further. I do think that there is a reluctance to deal as stiffly with a private board, than it is to deal with your own administration. And the minister almost signalled that this morning inadvertently. He said, my God the people in the private sector were understandably shocked when they read that I was going to put in medical directors, administrators instead of doctors in charge of those hospitals. Now, I know what the shock would be, the shock would be that how can he administer. He has not got the right to do so but I believe, Mr. Chairman, that the shock nevertheless stems from the same emotion — that these people won't be told what they can do. And even if the minister had said, that we won't allow budget for a medical man, to be head of the institution but will budget them on the basis of an administrator, there would still be the same problem.

Now, if you can do it in the public sector, why can't you do it in the private sector? Why can't you — without worrying about what these boards are going to say — say that we're no longer going to budget these institutions for a medical doctor. Why not? That if it costs \$60,000 for the head of their school on the basis of a medical pay, and you can get an administrator for \$40,000, why don't you tell him you have to be satisfied in the same way as the public institutions are satisfied with an administrator at a lower salary? And why can't you tell them that type of thing? I believe that you can, and maybe there is another explanation. But, Mr. Chairman, on the cold turkey figures, it's 4 percent for the public institutions, 6 percent for the privately run institutions. How can the minister live with that?

MR. SHERMAN: Well, Mr. although the honourable member reflects the figures accurately and makes a good case, the fact of the matter is that in actual practise, and I ask him to accept this, there is no such case. We have dealt with the agencies, the private agencies very, very stringently, very, very strictly — they are run by lay people, lay boards, as he knows. They have all had to go through the line by line budgeting process of our Agency Relations Branch. They in fact are controlled and directed, in terms of their budgets and their expenditures, very, very tightly. The school at Portage, the Manitoba School has not suffered any reduction either in programs or in amenities to the residents. There has been no reflection in terms of any kind of reduction, where food or amenities or programs or services are concerned. What has happened over the past two years is that the resident population of the Manitoba School at Portage is down, and it's down by 9 percent, whereas the resident population at St. Amant and Pelican Lake has not varied except in the case of Pelican Lake, by one resident, it has not varied at all. The resident population at

St. Amant was 269, in fact if you take the two-year period it's up. In 1976 at St. Amant it was 269; 1977 it was 271; in 1978 271. At Pelican Lake in 1976 it was 66; in 1977 it was 69 and in 1978, 70. So that in that two-year period, St. Amant has increased by two residents, Pelican Lake has increased by three residents. In the same period, Mr. Chairman, the population of residents of the Manitoba School has declined from 934 to 855, which is a total of 9 percent. I repeat, that the Manitoba School has not been curtailed in terms of menus, in terms of services, in terms of programs or in terms of staff. As a matter of fact, as the honourable member knows, there is no staffing freeze of any kind in effect at the Manitoba School. They're allowed to staff to full complement, but their population has declined, and I want to reassure my honourable friend that these are only two agencies of something between, I think, 125 and 150 external agencies with whom we deal, and that external agency field has been monitored, controlled and directed very, very tightly.

And St. Amant and Pelican Lake have been too. They have been held to tight reporting and accountability on a line by line basis, and they in their view consider themselves very rigidly controlled in budgetary terms, but the explanation is in the difference in the populations.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, as I was talking to you I was almost worried that there was a good explanation, but after the minister has completed talking, I'm satisfied that there is not a good explanation.

It's interesting that the minister, first of all, says that the population decreased by 9 percent in Portage. The increase in Pelican Rapids is four people. Why does he say four people and 9 percent? Because four people is 6 percent. But it's four people, it sounds like nothing, but it's 6 percent. It's 66 to 70. Also, he doesn't deal with the other population figures. He mentioned that these are just two institutions. Are the other population figures besides the Pelican Lake and St. Amant also down? Or are they up? Or are they down? Where are they? Because we are dealing with other figures. You've dealt with Pelican Lake, which has gone up, the population there has gone up by 6 percent. You've also taken it over a period of two years, and I venture to say, Mr. Chairman, because I got it last year that the difference in the funding between 1977 and 1978, showed a more marked disparity than between 1978 and 1979. Because when I asked the minister about this last year, he indicated to me that he wasn't able to deal as rapidly with the cutbacks, in the area of the private sector, as he was with the public sector.

So when we take it over the two-year period, I warrant you, Mr. Chairman, that the percentage differences can't be related merely to a decrease in population. Because first of all, I don't know whether there has been that much of a difference — maybe the figures will be obtainable — but secondly, Mr. Chairman . . .

MR. SHERMAN: At Portage?

No, the Portage one I'm accepting the figure. I'm accepting the Portage figure. I'm suggesting that the other figures you've just taken two institutions, that you've only taken two institutions — you've taken Pelican Lake and St. Amant. Pelican Lake has gone up by 6 percent in the two-year period, and the other I gather it's stayed about the same. But there are other people involved, you haven't given the other figure. There are other people involved in the private institutions that you're dealing with. And I would think also, Mr. Chairman, that when we are dealing with 934 to 855, we also have to be talking about some scale, in terms of the operations, which would make a decrease in population less dramatic in terms of reducing costs, than we are when we're dealing with an institution of 66 people, which is what he said is at Pelican. How much were at St. Amant?

MR. SHERMAN: 271.

MR. GREEN: 271 — and they went up by one, I think he said.

MR. SHERMAN: They went up by two in the two years.

MR. GREEN: Two in the two years, so we can ignore that percent. But we are dealing with institutions, Mr. Chairman, which certainly would have less economies of scale, where we're going from 66 to 70, and one which has gone from 934 to 855.

And if the minister says that the \$200,000 is entirely made up of food costs or supervision costs over that number, I say that he hasn't made a case. If he says that he deals with these agencies in exactly the same way, Mr. Speaker, I think we saw from his initial remark that he hasn't made a case, because of the horror that he felt that the newspapers were going to say that the private institutions were going to be dealt with in that way.

Secondly, I wonder if he has the figures handy, because I did ask for them, whether he can tell me the actual, the actual increase in the 1978 figures, the increase in the 1978 figures from 1977 as between the public and the private, because then we would have a two-year picture of it, I wonder if he has that?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. SHERMAN: Well, Mr. Chairman, I want to assure the Honourable Member for Inkster that the reaction of persons associated with St. Amant and Pelican Lake, the inaccuracy in the reporting of Friday's discussion, should not be exaggerated or misinterpreted or misunderstood. The fact of the matter is that if one were thinking of dealing with agencies or any operation or any institution in a way different from that which has been the course, I would think that it's reasonable to expect that there would be some preliminary consultation, not merely a disclosure in the House.

MR. GREEN: Right, I agree with that — I agree with that.

MR. SHERMAN: It was really that which caused the consternation. The increase in the budgets for this group of agencies, external agencies, that we're looking at at the present time, Mr. Chairman, was in 1978-79, the year just ended, one and a half percent, as against the preceding year, 1977-78. So there was only a one and a half percent increase in their budgets last year. That, I think, would have to be construed even by the most zealous disciple of restraint and tight fiscal management, as a pretty limited, pretty restricted increase.

MR. GREEN: How much was the increase in the public area?

MR. SHERMAN: Last year, three and a half percent.

MR. GREEN: And one and a half in the private?

MR. SHERMAN: For these agencies, that's right.

MR. GREEN: Okay.

MR. SHERMAN: There was three and a half percent in that same period with respect to the public agencies, or public institutions, and one and a half percent this year. I can only repeat that we are riding as tight a herd and holding as tight a rein on the external agencies' budgets as we are on the public institutions and agencies, even though when you isolate individual ones and compare them on a one-on-one basis that is not always evident. But overall, Mr. Chairman, I want to assure my honourable friend that that is being done.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, I do want the Minister to reflect on the last figures, I mean, the ones that he says he gave. In the 1978 estimates, that's last year's estimates, is he suggesting to me that the private institutions got one and a half percent increase, and the public three and a half — in last year's estimates? Is that correct?

MR. SHERMAN: That's right, Mr. Chairman. The increase in the vote requirement — in 1977-78, the vote for this particular component, these external agencies that we're looking at, was \$6,213,500, and this past year, the one that we've just closed off, it was \$6,306,200, and that is one and a half percent.

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

MR. LAURENT L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, is Steinbach involved in this too? And also the Canadian Association for Mentally Retarded?

MR. SHERMAN: That's right. And the Steinbach Development Centre, Winnipeg School Division No. 1, that's Montcalm, and transportation costs for the North YMCA Summer Day Program.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I've got last year's Estimate Book in front of me, and I see an increase in the public sector, on the same items — 8.6 to 8.8; and in the private, 6.2 to 6.3. And those

figures, Mr. Chairman, do not come out to 3 — I have them right in front of me, Page 40. They went from '78 of 8.6 to '79 of 8.8, and you can add the salaries to that, 1.6 to 1.7, and the increase in the private sector was almost comparable, 6.2 to 6.3. Those are the figures in the Estimates Book, and that is not one and a half percent and three and a half percent.

MR. SHERMAN: We show . . .

MR. GREEN: Well, these are the Estimates, '78 to '79. Mr. Chairman . . .

MR. SHERMAN: I'll check the percentage calculated.

MR. GREEN: Okay. And you know, there are other things that go into percentages, too. You've already given me some — in other words population.

MR. SHERMAN: Sure there are.

MR. GREEN: I can show, Mr. Chairman, what is . . . how many people are being dealt with in the private sector institutions? The total number? —(Interjection)— I've got 66 and 250 in two institutions, and I want to know the total number.

MR. SHERMAN: Well, in these two institutions, St. Amant and Pelican Lake, we're dealing with a total of 340 . . .

MR. GREEN: What's the total?

MR. SHERMAN: . . . 341, 271 in St. Amant and 70 in Pelican Lake.

MR. GREEN: How much more is there altogether? How many do you have altogether in the private institutions?

MR. SHERMAN: Well, is the honourable member asking about all the external agencies in the field that we fund, because . . .

MR. GREEN: Yes. How many children, or retardates, never mind children, are being dealt with for the \$6.7 million, the number?

MR. SHERMAN: Well, the children that are being dealt with under this vote that we're looking at — \$6,748,000 — are those in St. Amant, those in Pelican Lake, those who are serviced by the Steinbach Development Centre . . .

MR. GREEN: Right.

MR. SHERMAN: . . . those who have their transportation covered to the North YMCA Summer Day Program, those who attend Montcalm School in Winnipeg School Division No. 1, and it also includes the grant to the central office of the Manitoba Division of the Canadian Association for the Mentally Retarded.

MR. GREEN: May I then take it that the institutional care that it being looked at for \$6,700,000 involves between 300 and 325 people — at the St. Amant and the Pelican Lake?

MR. SHERMAN: Well, that's 341 right there.

MR. GREEN: Okay, 341, I'm sorry. Is that what we're dealing with?

MR. SHERMAN: Well, we're dealing with them, plus the others. Let me give the honourable member the list, Mr. Chairman: The St. Amant Centre, 1978-79, the appropriation was \$5,012,400.00.

MR. GREEN: How many people?

MR. SHERMAN: St. Amant, 271.

MR. GREEN: Well, let me just deal with that figure.

MR. SHERMAN: Well, just let me give you this.

MR. GREEN: Okay.

MR. SHERMAN: That was 1978-79, St. Amant \$5,012,400, right?

MR. GREEN: Right.

MR. SHERMAN: 1979-80, \$5,349,500, right. Now let me give you Pelican Lake. And here we're looking at 70, 70 residents. 1978-79, \$1,076,800; 1979-80, \$1,192,000.00. Steinbach Development Centre. These are severely and profoundly retarded kids who are served by an activity program at the Steinbach Branch of the CMR five days a week. 1978-79, \$37,800.00.

MR. GREEN: Yes.

MR. SHERMAN: 1979-80, \$41,200.00.

MR. GREEN: Right.

MR. SHERMAN: North YMCA Summer Day Program, and this is for severely retarded and multiply-handicapped kids, but this is just the transportation costs, 1978-79, \$5,800; 1979-80, \$6,200.00.

Winnipeg School Division No. 1, this is Montcalm Physical Disability children, or severely retarded who are given educational opportunities at that school, 1978-79, \$71,700; 1979-80, \$81,000.00.

MR. GREEN: Okay.

MR. SHERMAN: And the final item in this \$6.748 million that we're looking at is the grant to the central office of the Manitoba Division of the Canadian Association for the Mentally Retarded, general purpose grant for the operation of that office, 1978-79 it was \$101,700; 1979-80, it's \$79,000.00. Those 1979-80 totals should add up to the \$6,748,900 that we're discussing here. But if you ask me exactly how many kids, I can't tell you.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, I don't need the exact number of people that are involved because the Minister has given me enough figures to deal with the point. At the public institutions, we are spending roughly \$11,300,000, and we are servicing 900 people, which means, Mr. Chairman, that in the private institutions, we are spending roughly \$7 million, which is \$4 million less than we are spending in the private (sic) institutions, and we are serving approximately 300 people. That's one-third of the number of people are being served in the private institutions, as against what is being served in the public institutions, and if we look at St. Amant, we are spending \$5,300,000 on 271 people — I think that's the figure he gave — as against spending \$11.3 million on 900 people. —(Interjection)— Well, I'm just giving you mathematics.

MR. SHERMAN: That's right but just . . .

A MEMBER: You want to discuss per diem rates not . . .

MR. GREEN: Well, Mr. Chairman, I am suggesting that the treatment that is being given in areas outside of the private institutions, is being looked at much more favorably, much more generously — and I don't want to take anything away from them, don't misunderstand. Mr. Chairman, I cannot, as a taxpayer, feel that I am spending too much money on the retarded. I am spending too little. And I am not a big-time spender. And I say, Mr. Chairman, if I had to face my constituents and say that there is going to be an increase in some of your taxation because we, as human beings cannot live with ourselves unless we do justice to these people, I will go out and say it and I will run for office on it, and I will be elected on it, because the people in my constituency also feel that we are not spending too much money on retardates.

What I am saying is that I don't want to take away from the public institutions, I would merely like to set the standard of the public institutions by what's happening in the private institutions. I would like you to go to the private institutions, look at the menus, look at the nature of the buildings, look at everything that's being done, it's the same money, and then do that for what you're doing at the Manitoba School and the Pelican Lake — excuse me, just the Manitoba School, which is the only private . . . And I think they're entitled to it. I do not think that these people are to be

dealt with any differently by the Minister, and I believe that if the Minister goes and looks he will see, objectively speaking, that the new institutions, the one that is being run by St. Amant, is getting more from the public than the public institutions are. All you have to do is take the figures. You're spending \$5.3 million on 271 people, and \$11.3 million on 900 people.

Now, there are certain economies of scale, but if my honourable friend wants to go back to that subject, then I say, look at your increases. Four percent for the public institutions, six percent for the private institutions. I am pleading with the Minister. I don't want him to spend more money than he thinks should be spend spent. —(Interjection)— Well, Mr. Chairman, perhaps from our point of view, and the Minister will say that we have a money tree, I have no money tree, but I'm sure that if suddenly private business needdd a lift in the province of Manitoba and came to the government they would find this bush that they're talking about. Because they have found that every time they have needed it, when they needed a pulp industry in The Pas, they found the mulberry bush, they found the money bush and they gave \$100 million away.

So let's not talk about the money tree. Let's talk about your standards which are tough enough — I was going to use the word "mean" but I'm not in one of my partisan moods today — they're tough enough. That's a healthy word. Take the standard that you set for St. Amant, have your administrators go through St. Amant, tell them, where that institution, what has to be done at the Manitoba School to bring them up to the same standards. And I believe that given that type of argument, your Assistant Deputy Minister over there would get more money out of you. There's \$200,000 right here, and I suggest to you that there are ways, all useful ways, none of them wasted, none of them spending money like a drunken sailor, that Dr. Tavener — and it really is unfair, because I was probably just as tough as you are when he came in with the Estimates — but I'm saying that he will find a way, and Dr. Lothar will find a way to usefully spend that money in such a way that no citizen of the province of Manitoba, knowing what it is going for and seeing the condition of the people that it's being used for, will begrudge that kind of expenditure.

So let's not talk about raising the standards, let's just talk about meeting the standards of those institutions which are publicly funded, which the Minister has to give the money to, that's all.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, my officials advise me that the percentage figure that I supplied the Honourable Member for Inkster is correct; that the increase in that equivalent period that we were discussing for the public institutions was 3.5 percent, as compared to 1.5 percent for the private ones. Now, let me just say that there are other factors that have to be taken into account here besides those that perhaps have been addressed up to this point in time.

In the first place, you've got to look at levels of care, and I did give members, the other day, a breakdown of the population at Portage. And this is not to say that there are not a lot of severely and profoundly retarded residents at Portage, but there are also a lot of moderates, mildly retarded and borderline cases, and when you're looking at St. Amant, you're looking at the majority as severely and profoundly retarded, and the same thing is true — and some of them with multiple handicaps, most of them in fact, most of them with multiple handicaps, and at Pelican Lake, the same thing. The majority severely retarded. So there are different levels of care that are required, and those naturally reflect themselves in the per diems.

There's another point that I think should not be overlooked, and that is that in the funding for the private agencies, the per diems for the private agencies, we're including amortization of debt, we're including general maintenance and utilities, heat, light, power, etc. Now, with respect to the Manitoba School at Portage, those figures are not reflected in the budget item for Portage that we see in front of ourselves in these Estimates. The maintenance and public works costs at Portage and the utilities, etc., are all contained in the government services budget, relative to provincial institutions. They're not included in this \$9 million that we're looking at here. So there is a difference there in the per diem rate, the amount of funding, the commitments to which that funding must go, which I would suggest, with respect, goes some considerable distance to explaining what the honourable member feels is a serious discrepancy. But I think measured in those terms and measured in terms of the level of care; measured in terms of the comparative increases in budgets last year as between private and public, that the discrepancy is illusory rather than real. And I repeat that we are holding a tight rein on the external agencies, and I'm sure that the Honourable Member for Inkster has heard that from many agencies.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, how many of the private agencies were called in and asked to reduce their staff by 10 percent? Which is what the First Minister has said, that he has reduced the Civil Service by 13 percent. You know, I don't believe that, but if he believes it, then he should be asking these institutions, have they reduced their staff by 10 percent? —(Interjection)— Pardon me?

MR. SHERMAN: But neither has Portage.

MR. GREEN: Well, Mr. Chairman, you say that Portage has not reduced its staff by ten. Has Portage reduced its staff at all?

MR. SHERMAN: The staffing complement at Portage is 715, Mr. Chairman, they're allowed to staff to full complement. —(Interjection)— We have six vacancies in Portage right now.

MR. GREEN: How many was the staff last year and how many is the staff this year? Is there a reduction in the staff load at Portage over the last two years?

MR. SHERMAN: No.

MR. GREEN: There's no reduction. The Minister is saying that there is no reduction in staff. Well, Mr. Chairman, I am suggesting to the Minister that I think it would be useful for the Minister to provide a comparable — since he says that the items are not comparable, and since the only items that we see, and he acknowledges those figures are two -fold. One, that there has been 4 percent increase in the public institutions and 6 percent increase in the private institutions. That the public institutions for \$11 million dollars served 900 people, that the private institutions for \$5 million dollars served 270 people. I suggest that these are questions which deserve answers and that we cannot, we have not got them, I submit, other than the statement that there have to be other things taken into account, that the minister should provide an analysis as to what is being spent in those homes which are fully public funded but are run by private boards, and that amount which is being spent by institutions which come directly under his administration.

I am predicting to you, Mr. Chairman, and I can't do other than refer to the figures, that the level of care and the amount of money that is being spent, and as it will be reflected in all of the resulting indices of treatment, food, laundry, staff, everything else, will show that the private institutions are being looked upon more favourably than the public. Now the Minister says that is not so, then let him show which areas are different, and I don't expect him to do it at this minute, if he thinks he can, go ahead. But I suggest that he analyse it, because I'm not satisfied, Mr. Chairman, that the people who are, that the public institutions are going to be second class institutions.

My feeling in this connection is exactly the same as with the private schools. I am sure that if the public funds private schools, the private schools will be much more lavish institutions than the public schools and the public schools will become the place where you send your children if you can't send them to a private school. Now, I don't want to get into that debate, I want to tell the Minister that I believe that the same thing is happening here, and I would ask him to conduct a careful analysis and either bring it back at this session or bring it back to the next time when his Estimates come up to assure us that that is not going to happen to the people who happen to be in the public rather than the private institutions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1)—pass —the Honourable Minister.

MR. SHERMAN: I can do that, Mr. Chairman, because I am prepared to meet my commitment to the honourable member for Inkster, that I gave him last year that there would not be a double standard. I am not sure that I can do it this week but I will certainly do it before we are on this topic again.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1)—pass — the Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, what is the length of stay in the Pelican Lake, it's a kind of a halfway house, it's to get the people back in the community I think, so what is the length of stay?

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, about a half a dozen residents of Pelican Lake leave the institution each year. Well what we've got here for Pelican Lake for separations, separations in 1970, slightly more than half a dozen, Mr. Chairman. Separations for Pelican Lake in 1976 were 11; 1977, 8.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, in the list of the community residences that the Minister was good enough to give me last Friday, there are no new ones. What I mean by new ones, no new ones, new to this government except those two that are not yet opened, there weren't any new ones last year. These were all in places except two under the residence for training, Covenant Home

in Winnipeg, and Juniper Centre in Thompson. Those were the two only ones, eh?

MR. SHERMAN: That's correct, Mr. Chairman, with two more planned for this year.

MR. DESJARDINS: Then what is the death rate in Portage la Prairie this year, this past year?

MR. SHERMAN: I am not sure Mr. Chairman. I will have to get that information for my honourable friend. It's not in the tables prepared for our annual report. The death rate?

MR. DESJARDINS: Yes. Well, Mr. Chairman, what I'm really trying to find out is, where do they go? The Minister said that there was a 9 percent reduction in the population of Portage. Now we have no new facilities that we didn't have before. I mean, two of them are not opened yet, I am not counting them, and we have the Pelican Lake, there is only 12 that are going back from there going to the tenth or twelfth in the community, I can't understand where those people are going now. Were some of them sent home or in foster homes or what?

MR. SHERMAN: A few went to the DASH Residence which opened last year, Mr. Chairman. Others in some cases, went back to their homes, their parents. In other cases they have gone to foster homes in the community.

MR. DESJARDINS: My next question then, Mr. Chairman, is the last year that we were in office we had 321 profound cases and this the Minister is saying is 193. That's down to 128. Now unless there was a new assessment, because that was one of the things that we have pretty well agreed, that institution, you have had some people there, they have been there so many years, and that they were profound and I see that if they're severe, it's the reverse. That we had 245 and now it's 351, so there was a decrease of 128 in the profound and an increase of 106 in the severe cases. Now I can see the moderate leaving, and there was only 23 and the mild 26. Now I can see some of them and most of them were going to Pelican Lake, that was the intent of Pelican Lake. So I don't know what the figures mean. If there has been some change it seems pretty high in one year and in sixteen months, that there should be a reduction of 128 in the profound because those are some that I have always thought that those people would never get better.

MR. SHERMAN: Well Mr. Chairman, the honourable member would have to tell me where he gets those figures from. The total of profound at Portage on December 31st, 1977, that I gave him the other day, was 202, and on December 31st, 1978, 193. So that's a reduction of 9. —(Interjection)— It could be or it could be through reclassification through testing or it could be from death, but the reduction is 9 and I think the honourable member mentioned something far greater than that.

MR. DESJARDINS: Yes I did, Mr. Chairman. I did, Mr. Chairman, and the Minister and I well know that he's not the one that decided who the profound was. He was given this information the same as I was when I was Minister, and the official information that I have in front of me for the last year to prepare my estimates of 1977-78, so that would be one year ahead of them, I have profound 321. So in two years, or practically, you say there was only about 6, so that means that the first year it went from 321. What did you say last year there was 6 less I think, you said it was about 200 and something? So that was, let's say, 120, 121 from the official figure that I was given by the same staff that are now getting those numbers from my honourable friend.

MR. SHERMAN: Well I'd have to ask my staff, Mr. Chairman, I don't have that kind of mathematics. I don't have that figure for December 31st, 1976. In fact I don't have any breakdown for 1976, but the 1977 figure at the end of 1977, which I presume my honourable friend's 1977-78 Estimates would have been based on, was 202 profound, 338 severe, 198 moderate, 113 mild, 41 borderline. That 202 in the profound category was down to 193 as of this past December 31st, so I would have to ask the Department about that.

MR. DESJARDINS: As I said, which I don't believe this is the case, unless when my honourable friend became the Minister, he just ordered the people to look at the different categories and tried to knock them, down, and I don't believe that. Now I am saying that my figures are 321 profound, severe 245, moderate 201, mild 147, borderline 31, for a total of 945, and that is in the same book for a previous year that my honourable friend has now. So I find that either these figures don't mean a darn thing, if they're changed, or we're doing much better than I ever thought, than anybody

ever thought, because I was always led to believe that a certain amount of these retarded people, there is no way that they would be cured. Especially when you're dealing with the profound that had been there for years, and for one year to come down from 321, and I'm not talking about 193, I'm talking about close to 200, I think the Minister said something like that, or 201. So that leaves 121, and to me, there's something wrong. It doesn't make sense. You reclassify it then, somebody's playing with figures, it doesn't mean a damn thing because I'm darn sure that you could not reclassify in one year at the school in Portage, the School for the Retarded in Portage, that you'll go down 120 in the profound and go up about 100 or whatever in the severe.

Why I'm asking that is, why is there less people now, why did the population go down? I can't see any new institutions, this is not an argument to blame or a political argument, this is something, where are they going? There's no new community, the death rate, I don't know what the death rate is, this is why I asked the Minister that, I don't imagine there are that many, I'm sure there are not that many. They've cut down from 9 percent.

Now, I'm quite concerned because I had to reverse a kind of a policy that we were following, and like the Minister, we also meant well. We were trying to reduce the population of the institutions, but we had no place to send them. We realized that it was pretty well of a mix-up and we'd have to be careful because then these people were going, some of them, in different hospitals, general hospitals, and I don't think that's the place for them, that's for the acute short-term illness, not long-term illness, and I wonder where these 90 or so went. I can't see all of them going to their own residences. There might be some in the mild ones, but there wouldn't be such a change in the profounds.

I can see the Minister is lost and I can assure him that I am lost also. What are we doing? Where are we sending these people? How do we decrease the population? It's great, if we have no other facilities. I can see that the Minister is right, there's one that we had authorized but wasn't open when we left the government, that is the DASH Residence, but that's only for eight. There's only room for 8 there, so something seemed to be wrong, Mr. Chairman. I wonder if the Minister could try to find out what the score is, because it's okay to reduce the population. It's great, but where are you sending these people? Are you sending them back into the community before they're ready? You know, we haven't been able to put into effect the law that we were talking about, or the legislation that we were talking about, about sending some of them, the moderate ones back to their communities where they belong and back to the schools and so on. You know the trouble we've had with the teachers and the trustees and so on on that, and I know the Minister hasn't moved any further on that, so it concerns me very much.

Mr. Chairman, while I'm on my feet, I think that after the fire or around the fire, we had, I think that part of the property there, a building or a cottage, was on loan to the General Hospital in Portage when they had a fire. I want to know if those people by now, they must be all be back in the hospital, are they using some of our facilities? I'm talking about the General Hospital in Portage.

And then we had the old Indian Residential School, Lakeview, I think you called it. I want to know if the patients are still there or are they moved back. I understand there were approximately 51 adult males that are moved back, so there — what I'm really trying to find out, is there — and I don't imagine there is — an overcrowding. I guess everything is repaired on the fire that they had in Portage, and the Minister can assure us that, if it's not done already, if there's a move from Lakeview back to the Portage School, that there won't be an overcrowding on this.

MR. SHERMAN: The hospital patients are all back in the School, Mr. Chairman. The ones who were in the Indian Residential School are still there and will continue to be there until the renovation of East Grove is completed. —(Interjection)— No. Well, they're all back in the hospital, yes. That's right. They're all back in the hospital and the ones who were in the Indian Residential School are still there.

To go back for a minute to what the honourable member was asking me about, I'm advised that a reasonably educated estimate of the death rate at Portage is between 20 and 25 a year.

Now, to go back to the other question about the discrepancy in the mathematics, I want to assure the Member for St. Boniface that there were no instructions given by me or my office to change any kind of classification, but I understand that there is reclassification that goes on through testing all the time. I'll have to try to find out why he would have had such a high figure given him in the profound category in 1977 because I certainly don't have that in my figures but I will check that out.

On the question of where do they go, those who have been leaving, where have they been going? The fact is, Mr. Chairman, that a significant number of them have been going to foster homes.

We increased the funding for mental retardation foster home sponsors, and —(Interjection)— Yes. That has improved the situation. They have gone to foster homes. They have — some of them, as I say, have returned to their own parental homes and there has been, obviously, some attrition through death, but any closer than that to the answer I'm not able to come. The foster home aspect, I think, is the one that provides the main explanation for the reduction, and we're attempting to emphasize that trend rather than putting more in. There are not more residents going into Portage all the time.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, that was going to be my next question. Are you saying that it's frozen now, that they will not accept new patients at all? Is the Minister saying that?

MR. SHERMAN: No, I can't say that we will not accept new patients at all, Mr. Chairman. Where necessary they certainly will be accepted, but the attempt goes on continually to ensure that there are others coming out, going into the community, going into foster homes, as practicably and rapidly as possible to compensate, to more than offset those whom it is necessary to accommodate there, but we haven't frozen the population.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I want to make it quite clear that I'm certainly not making any accusations. I'm not accusing the Minister. I think that there is very little, if any, difference between his thinking and my thinking when I was the Minister responsible, but I think he'll have to admit that it seems to be a little odd. Now, we haven't talked about new cases. You know, I think we have a certain population — I think it's pretty fair to say that a certain percentage of the population are retarded, and so many are severely retarded, and I think that there has been quite a reduction as it was, and we felt that this was about all we could do, and I'm surprised to see that in one year, without any new facilities, with not an increase — I don't imagine that there's much of a change in the death rate — and also with — yes, I don't remember now if we had changed the rate for the foster homes. I know that if we'd have had money for that, I know we were working on that, and I know that the Minister has announced something just lately, but it seems to me that that's pretty high, and I wonder why there is such a change. Now, if the Minister could say, "Well, all right, we have new homes." You know, next year he'll have two more and that will take some of these people.

And then there's another thing that we were trying to do, I think is that we were trying to keep less outside of the — I think that we had some outside of the province and we were trying to reduce that also, and I think that this is one of the things that the now Minister was suggesting that we should do as much as possible, so I don't think there's much change on that, but I wonder if we — there are certain things that there didn't seem to be the proper explanation, and I wonder if the Minister could check on that and give us the good news, the reason why this can be done.

I wonder if the Minister can give us the breakdown on the staff in Portage, please.

MR. SHERMAN: I can, Mr. Chairman. Just let me say on that last point. The admissions to Portage are down, you know. There's certainly no freeze, but the admissions are down, and I think I gave the honourable member this figure the other day. From admissions of 112 in 1976 to 98 in 1977 to 91 in 1978. That doesn't reflect a freeze, but it reflects a declining admission trend and more getting out into the community through foster homes combines to produce the reduction in the population figure. I don't feel that any of us is lost on this point, either he or me or anyone else. I think it's explainable in those mathematical terms. There have been foster homes available. There has been the DASH Residence. There have been people who have taken their relatives back home. There have been deaths. There have been fewer admissions, and there have been increases in foster home accommodation, and I suggest that that is the sum and substance of the explanation.

Now, the staffing pattern at the School, Mr. Chairman, is as follows: Nursing staff is 405; medical is 7; Nursing Education is 6; Social Services 5; Education 14; Psychology 12; Physiotherapy and Motivational Therapy 33; Resource Services — that's laundry, dietary, housekeeping, etc., 198; and Contingency, 35 for a total of 715, with 6 current vacancies.

MR. DESJARDINS: I thank the Minister for his last answer. Now, going back — and he says that we're not lost — well, certainly death is not something new. We certainly must have had deaths in the previous years. —(Interjection)— Well, yes, but that's another thing. You must remember that the average population is increasing all the time. I remember not that long ago it was around 12 years old, and the last time I looked I think it was over 45.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hour being 4:30, and in accordance with Rule 19(2), I am interrupting the

proceedings for Private Members' Hour and will return at 8:00 p.m. this evening.

IN SESSION

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Radisson.

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

MOTION presented.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

RESOLUTION NO.8 — SALES TAX ON MEALS

MR. SPEAKER: We're now under Private Members' Hour. Proposed Resolutions. Resolution No. 8 — the Honourable Member for Wolseley.

MR. ROBERT G. WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Member for Emerson:

WHEREAS the people of Manitoba have been paying 5 percent tax on all meals purchased over \$3.00; and

WHEREAS the cost of food, labour, taxes, utilities and maintenance has caused the price of meals to increase since 1974; and

WHEREAS many Manitobans in the performance of their jobs, e.g. office workers, teachers, truckers, construction workers, etc., are required to eat all or part of their meals in restaurants; and

WHEREAS the intent of this tax was not to impose a penalty on the ordinary working man's meals;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the government of Manitoba consider the advisability of changing the legislation to only require the tax to be paid on meals costing \$5.00 or more.

MR. SPEAKER: You've heard the motion of the Honourable Member for Wolseley, seconded by the Honourable Member for Emerson. Are you ready for the question? The Honourable Member for Wolseley.

MR. WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I rise to urge all members of the House to support this — what I consider a common sense Resolution. I think if we raise the limit to \$5.00 for individual meals before any provincial tax is collected, I think this would be a welcome addition in these times of wondering how we're going to manage the purse strings, but it's because of certain things happening, and I believe the members opposite, who wanted to take credit for the rain, have to take credit for the drought that we are now experiencing, and by that I mean I would have favoured a Resolution that had no tax on meals at all, and if the former NDP Cabinet had not left us badly, about \$221 million in debt, this member would have attempted a no-tax Resolution. But, in order to solicit some support in this non-partisan Resolution, I felt that I should consider a figure which appealed to the men and women of the Wolseley constituency.

But I make this Resolution not only for the working men and women of all age groups, and I purposely left out that term so that members opposite would not sort of accuse this member, who has the Labour Union Headquarters in his riding, of trying to woo Labour. So I felt that I left the working man aspect of this Resolution out and said "all" the citizens of Manitoba and certainly those that it applies to. I noted in the earlier debate that it was raised to \$3.00 and my colleague, the Member for St. James Assiniboia, was unjustly accused by members opposite, then the government of trying to bring some earth-shattering resolution to the floor of the Chamber, but I can assure you that I would like to apologize to the member, the voters of Wolseley for what appears to be a very small and insignificant resolution.

They all know full well at Town Hall meetings and private meetings at homes that I have an abundance of ideas which may or may not have some credibility, and they have to be tried in the type of public forum occasionally to see if they have any merit, and a lot of them have not seen the light of day because of our present restraint program, and also strong lobbies in certain areas prevent myself from bringing some of these forward because they're considered as critical of that particular segment of the business community.

But this tax, in my opinion, is just another example of forcing people to manoeuvre their eating

habits and manoeuvre their lifestyle in order to avoid what could be considered a nuisance tax when you take it in light of some of the other things that are taxed in our system. And you know, I think that if we're going to — certainly our Conservative Party stands for the work ethic and production, and I think if we're going to ask the working people, the people who produce, we've got to see that they're well fed, they're motivated and healthy, and I think in some small way this increase to \$5.00 would, and maybe it does sound a little far-fetched, but it could possibly aid in the attitude and the production aspect of it because people wouldn't be bobbing and weaving to adjust their noonday meal to be under the \$3.00 present taxation limit.

There is really so many things that you could tax rather than meals and I think when we talk about preventative health and medicine, I see nothing wrong with continuing the move upward on taxation of cigarettes if it meant, in my opinion — I'm certain the Member for St. Boniface who is equally as stout as I am, would agree that removal of tax on meals — to me, I would much favour that type of a taxation and it may be — I can see other things that should be taxed and meals should be exempted.

I think in this day and age of affluent image that's being projected by even those that don't have any money, that possibly if we taxed diamonds and gold jewellery we could possibly exempt meals. Again, I'm using my own personal ideas of what I feel should be taxed in favour of some day removing taxes on meals and, because with the unfortunate phenomena of the '70s and certainly going into the '80s, practically every household has two people working and if I think its evidenced by the number of new restaurants starts in the City of Winnipeg and Province of Manitoba would indicate that more people are eating out because both heads of the family are working.

And so I think we're going to drift towards people going out to eat and taking for granted that the driving home at the noon hour to have that rushed 15 minute meal, unlike the MLAs who have a little longer but many people get an hour for lunch and by the time they drive through traffic jams and what have you, it is a 20-minute lunch period and I would much rather bring forward a resolution that would encourage people to eat in restaurants and to me the removing of the Meal Tax, at least taking it up to \$5.00 would certainly be that type of motivation to cause them to continue to eat out. One of my colleagues indicated that "Well, the Cabinet would indicate that the Treasury might not be able to afford this resolution". Well, if the member knew me a little better than that he knew that I could come up with five areas and save money if we were to lose three or four hundred thousand dollars in taxes because of this resolution, I would simply point to what the Member for River Heights said today, "By taking those, the doing away with the new Provincial Judges Court, we will save the taxpayers of Manitoba \$2 million." I see nothing wrong with the Judges of this province working under old structural conditions and stop imagining that they need wall-to-wall carpeting and intercom systems and all the other fancy trappings that they would have if they had a new Provincial Judges Court.

I think we could, the end of the Mincome Program, I was very disappointed when my own minister stood up and indicated some weak support for it but \$17.2 million waste of taxpayers' money, we will save over \$1 million this year by getting out of the program and to me, this helps justify my resolution when I fight for to end something and that day finally comes and regardless of the fact that they may be storing some of this obsolete material at the university, the end of that \$17.3 million program is an interesting self-satisfying turn of events in my life anyway .

I think we have to look at some of the things that I've been trying to do to continue to have our population go out and eat in restaurants, and we have since we've taken office, many changes in the Liquor laws, and I refer to a, unlike the Member for Elmwood, I didn't get this printed in a very large circulated periodical, but on page 3 there's an article by the Member for Wolseley which says "Wilson plans to make Manitoba a fun place in the '80s." —(Interjection)—.

A MEMBER: What about this year, Bob?

MR. WILSON: So, we are attempting to do away with the regulations under the former czar, Frank Sims, that he brought in and we hope to be able to encourage people to have an enjoyable time after a hard day's work at the office or in the, even if it happens to be the mines or the industries of the city and we hope to be able to encourage the community stand-up bar, or stand-up pub. We hope to have an ethnic flair to the different sections of our city which contain that ethnic mosaic of mixtures of people, and we could have that thrust of good times and everything and to me, a woman running around figuring out the taxation on a food bill of \$3.00 when one is out after work is the type of thing that I would like to see removed.

I'd like a real, free flow of cash. I'd like people to be able to exchange and barter without having the taxman there. To me I'm just wondering sometime if the figures, maybe I could ask the Finance Minister the cost of administration in collecting many of these things. We are trying to cut down on government forms and I can see where we might be able to have a future reduction in maybe

staff by increasing this to \$5.00 by a less of a workload in the Finance Department. There's always got to be savings whenever there's a reduction in the workload so I'm looking forward to making many statements which will encourage Manitoba to have its citizens go visit Saskatchewan and Alberta and B.C. and be proud to say they're from Winnipeg and Manitoba. We encourage all those festivals that the rural members have and encourage members opposite to attend the Miami Mule Derby or wherever it is.

I don't want to leave other members out, but I have such a short period of time, I wanted to encourage members opposite to vote for this resolution. I had occasion to meet their very famous Research Assistant, the former Member for St. Matthews in the hallway and told him to get busy because I wanted him to give some of the same comments that he made to one of the members opposite so that they could read them into the 1979 record in which he seemed to feel that the resolution was useless, it had no merit because he talked about Cuba and Russia and all the things dear to his heart.

He seemed to feel that because a Conservative member was considering introducing this resolution, that it was a battle cry for the working man that somebody on the opposite side should be introducing and not the Member for St. Matthews, I mean, the former Member for St. Matthews, but the former member for Thompson, Mr. Dillon, did support the resolution back in 1976 and he said it had very little impact on the working man. And I'm sure that some of the people who did not vote for him probably read those comments and felt that here was a man that wasn't interested in helping out the working man, but I see later on that he came around after listening to the arguments of myself and the Member for St. James Assiniboia and others on this side, and if I could quote from him on page 32, he says "I don't believe that we will have any difficulty with this resolution" because he felt that time would increase the exemption automatically. Well, I'm hoping that that time is 1979 because I'm standing up now and saying "Well, inflation is here, but the changes haven't taken place."

And the wages have gone up in comparison, not in comparison with the purchasing power and we feel that we, well at least I feel that this is the time to bring in this resolution because inflation has been increasing since 1976 and it's time we move this amount up to \$5.00.

I would, as I say, take exception to the Former Member for St. Matthews who said that it was basic nonsense to increase the amount and . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has 5 minutes.

MR. WILSON: . . . he pointed out that any change would be a lot of unnecessary bookkeeping and a lot of re-education of the restaurant people, whereas the former Member for Assiniboia, Mr. Patrick seemed to indicate that he went along with the idea that four people who had a bill of \$18.00 would ask for separate bills and this created a lot of work, and we all know that any expense to a businessman is passed on to the consumer. And I think we have to look at some of the consumer resistance that is taking place in the restaurant field, and I think we should do everything we can to encourage people to enjoy their time in the restaurant. When you have lettuce that goes from \$7.00 a case to \$28.00 a case, I think it's cause for concern and this has created problems in the preparation of salad bars, and all the rest of it. I think the former member Mr. Johansson was dead wrong, and we hope that he won't collect some IOUs from members opposite, and they will vote on this as a common sense resolution. I really took exception to the . . . he said that in Russia the constitution contains a clause that "he that does not work does not eat," and in Cuba we won't find any one on welfare. I would hope that members would dismiss that member's arguments during the last time this resolution came forward, and support the resolution.

I would like to see, if we had to, give some consideration, as I pointed out earlier, to taking other taxes which I consider a bit of a problem. I think we should take taxes off of equipment that is purchased by municipalities, and I think we should take taxes off of used cars that have been purchased new within the province, because we've already collected the taxes off them once, and to me that seems to be a form of double taxation. We have such a great expense of the public expense to the taxpayers in the area of environment, and I think it's time we looked at a special licensing, or something, to levy against those very large environment offenders, the junkyards, the people that store all those derelict cars and unsightly things and scatter around the country, and people that pollute the river, the riverboats that go up and down there, and even the two local dailies that clutter our streets with blown-around newspapers every day should pay a special levy to help offset our taxes.

So, don't give me the nonsense, I hope members on my side as well, won't give me the nonsense that this resolution is going to be far too expensive. And I hope it isn't debated, because if it is a common-sense resolution like I think it is, that if you recognize inflation is there and since 1976, if no other year, that increasing to \$5.00 is not too much to ask, and that I would hope that

it won't be necessary for myself, who has some speech problem that is going to be hopefully rectified with my visits to the Rehab Centre, that I won't have to get up and do a real selling job and have to close debate. I hope this will be voted on without too much opposition. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question? The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to make a few remarks. It's a tough act to follow, though. I always enjoy listening to the Member for Wolseley quote himself, and say that he's looking forward to his own speech, and that he's an "idea man". That's pretty hard to follow. It's sort of like a one-man band, Mr. Speaker, where the man plays not only the drum and trumpet and a mouth organ, but also a guitar and something else at the same time. —(Interjection)—

Mr. Speaker, I think that there may be, and I think we will have to hear the government position before we take a position on this Bill, but there may be some support for the general notion that there has been inflation over a period of time, especially the last four or five years, and that whereas at one time one could obtain a decent meal for \$3.00, especially a good lunch, that this is becoming increasingly more difficult.

I can recall about five years ago, or six years ago, when you could go downtown in Winnipeg, and for \$1.50 have what I would regard as a first-class lunch, or at least a very good lunch. Then it became \$2.50, and that was common for a year or so, and then eventually it went up to \$3.50 and \$4.50, and there is, of course, no limit as to how much money one could spend. So I think it's reasonable to suggest that there should be an adjustment. What that figure should be may be a subject of debate.

I don't welcome the trend that the honourable member sees about people eating out more — the future that he conceives is pizza twice a day, where people go out with the family to a local pizza parlour and have a pizza at lunch, and then the whole gang trundles off to dinnertime and has another pizza. Or they have hot dogs one day, and hamburgers on another, and pizza on the third — that's the type of eating that some people are now engaged in, which I think is at best described as unhealthy, and as one of my colleagues says, is simply junk food.

I read an article this morning, Mr. Speaker, about a well-known writer who said that he used to eat hot dogs until he read what Ralph Nader said about hot dogs, then he never ate another one again. I don't know what was in those hot dogs, whether it was something left over from used cars or demolished automobiles, but it scared him — scared him for life. —(Interjection)— Well, that's true. The honourable member says you wouldn't eat them if you saw them made, and we all know that in some cases, there's some areas in the production of food where one must be careful.

I still remember vividly a speech given by a girl in my class in Grade 10, who spent the summer working in a pickle factory, and talking — it brings to mind a number of good jokes, about the pickle slicer, but I won't tell that joke at this time, and . . . —(Interjection)— No, I just couldn't. Mr. Speaker, she told about how she spent the summer taking white dill pickles, which I guess are the worst colour a pickle can get, and then dyeing them green and packing them — this is a pickle packers lament.

But the member is correct, the member is correct, as to the fact that there is a growing trend of people eating out, and of course the fact that there is an increase in prices. I think this is both a good thing and a lamentable thing, and I see part of that trend as quite unhealthy, as I've said, in terms of the types of fast foods that are purchased. And I for one used to eat at McDonalds Restaurants on rare occasion, assuming that is a restaurant, but after a while one grows very tired of the quality of the food and the sort of taste, and the effect on one's stomach. The best thing to do, obviously, is to improve your diet by eating better food, and among those better foods — I say this with some trepidation, in view of some of the beef growers in the Assembly — but the people who seem to know about diet recommend more fish and other such foods, more poultry, in the sense of being healthier for a person than some of the diet that we all engage in.

I also think it's better, of course, for a family whenever possible to eat at home, rather than go down to the local McDonalds and give everybody a hamburger.

I think that one of the questions we want to know, though, from the government benches, the front benches, is how much revenue will be lost if this provision is adopted, and what will the government do to make up that lost revenue? I think that's the central question, Mr. Speaker. We don't want to see another cutback in vital services. We don't want to see this introduced at the cost of nursing homes or day care centres or hospital or health care, so we have to have a dollar figure — I think all members would be interested in how much money we're talking about.

I recall very well in the late 60's when Gurney Evans was the Minister of Finance, and I recall us pressing him time and time again for new exemptions, and new extensions, in the sales tax.

And he made one statement, it's the only thing he said that I can remember, but he said that he could see the logic in every exemption proposed. And I think there's a lot of truth in that. You can take many of the items in the sales tax, either the actual item, or what is taxed, let us say — that's what we're talking about, and he could see a reason for an exemption. So it's really a case of priorities, but I think that what he said was true.

I also say in passing, Mr. Chairman, that my honourable friend made a remark that I cannot let pass about how the government was saving all sorts of money in terms of corrections. We heard this morning how they lopped off \$1 million, Mr. Speaker, from The Pas jail. How? They're not going to build it. Well, they could lop off \$5 or \$6 million by not building . . . well, they're not going to build the court house, but they could save \$5 or \$6 million by not proceeding with that project. And they could probably save \$700 million if they closed up all the health facilities in Manitoba — they'd have a tremendous record to go to the public with. They could slash taxes by one-third and impress everybody with the effects of their program.

But we all know that their so-called savings cost \$2 million more at Brandon where they delayed and the price escalated \$2 million, and I say that they will pay \$2 million more because of the delay in The Pas.

A MEMBER: Deal with the resolution.

MR. DOERN: Well, I am dealing with the resolution. You recall the Member for Wolseley was making this point, and I'm simply countering the point. —(Interjection)—

So, Mr. Speaker, I say that we are very interested in ferreting out waste, and we are very concerned about the fact that certain programs are not being implemented, and we're also concerned about the average guy who hardly ever eats out, and who is simply the average person that's taking a brown bag to lunch every day. And many families hardly ever go out. There are many working families who very rarely, if ever, eat out in a restaurant. I don't know about in Wolseley, but I can tell you that I'm sure that in my own riding, that it is a rare occasion indeed for a working family to go out to dinner.

I mean, I know it's increasing, I know that it's more than it used to be, but it still isn't very much, Mr. Speaker. And years ago it was, years ago — 20, 30 years ago — it may have happened only once or twice a year.

A MEMBER: The Salisbury House is near.

MR. DOERN: Most people . . . well, I have a Salisbury House and I have a Juniors . . . I have a Juniors, and I have a couple of pizza parlours, and there's another place opening up, but, you know, none of those are in the \$5.00 category. They're all in the \$1.00 and \$2.00 and \$3.00 category. Well, I suppose if you went there and had the works, you know, if you had a hamburger and a milkshake and a piece of pie and some onion rings and some french fries, you might hit \$5.00, but that would be stretching it.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm finding this a very hard Session, because I find that I am in partial agreement with the Member for Wolseley, which gives me the jitters, and I find that I am in partial agreement with the Member for St. Matthews on his resolution, which I intend to speak on, so I am feeling uncomfortable with the company that I keep. But I would like to say that dealing with the specific proposal, if we can have some figures, and if we can have some indication of what the government will do in terms of lost revenue, how it will make that revenue up, or whether it will be simply more cuts in services, etc., I think that information is necessary before members on any side of the House can decide how they'll go on this particular resolution.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Crescentwood.

MR. WARREN STEEN (Crescentwood): Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to take a moment and put on record that last November 9, 1978, I wrote the Minister of Finance at that time, and asked the Minister if the provincial sales tax on meals which has been in force for the past 11 years, and it started out 11 years ago at \$2.00, and some five or six years ago, the former government increased it to \$3.00, and at that time, the then Minister of Finance was the current Member for St. Johns, and I wrote him some six years ago when he was in the role of Minister of Finance, suggesting at that time that perhaps we could raise it from the original figure of \$2.00 to \$3.00, and he and his government saw the wisdom at that time to increase the elimination of sales tax from \$2.00 to \$3.00.

The reason why I wrote our Minister of Finance back in November 9, 1978 was that the operator of the Grain Exchange restaurant in downtown Winnipeg — who mainly has a clientele from the

Grain Exchange Building and the Richardson Building; he does not have a liquor licence with his establishment and his hours of operation are from 7:00 in the morning to about 4:00 in the afternoon; he does what I would consider a fast-food trade, and his most expensive meal is \$3.50, which is Friday, which is roast beef with clam chowder soup, which is, in my opinion, very reasonably priced tells me that he collects between \$50.00 and \$75.00 quarterly on meals that are priced in the \$3.00 and above category.

I received a reply back from our Minister of Finance on December 11, 1978, which mentions retail sales tax exemption on meals, you're referring to my memo of November 9, he says that, "Staff has advised him that if the sales tax exemption regarding meals was increased to \$4.00, it is estimated that the revenues would be reduced by approximately \$800,000 per year." That's changing it from \$3.00 to \$4.00. Some of my colleagues on this side are of the opinion that perhaps the advising staff to the Minister of Finance have exaggerated the number of meals that are being consumed in this province. I don't know. It does seem to me to be a very, very high figure, and if we were to support this resolution and go to \$5.00, it doesn't necessarily mean that we would double that \$800,000 figure because naturally there would be certain meals that would be cut off at the \$4.00 range, etc. But it would be well in excess of \$1 million.

But I would agree with the mover of the resolution, that to get a proper full course meal today, whether you are a tradesman or a salesman and going into restaurants that are strictly non-licensed for liquor, that you cannot as a rule get a full-course meal today for \$3.00 or less. And I don't believe that anybody who has to eat away from home, because of his occupation and with our winter climate, it's no fun taking sandwiches and maybe leaving them in your service truck all morning long and coming back to eat them at 12 o'clock, and they're frozen. And we do have a lot of corner restaurants particularly in urban Winnipeg, but we have them in most of our towns and villages too, that serve excellent meals, and I think that we should raise the exemption on meals, and I had asked the Minister of Finance at that time, last fall, if he would consider \$4.00. He didn't say yes or no, whether he and his Cabinet colleagues were going to consider it — he just told me what the price tag was.

But I think that the Member for Wolseley, Mr. Speaker, has an excellent resolution and does bear giving consideration to.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. DON ORCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is a resolution which, I think, deserves some thought by all members of the House because of a number of the points that all members have already contributed to the record, increasing cost, etc., etc., of meals in restaurants. I didn't realize the price tag was quite that high on the resolution, and that may cause it to be given much more serious consideration, but in principle, I think it is something that all members of the House would probably agree upon.

I have had discussions with restaurant owners, particularly in Carman, and thought has been given, and I must admit I hadn't followed up as closely as I possible should have, but there may be merit, Mr. Speaker, in considering one other twist to this resolution, and that being that in the interests of streamlining the collection of sales tax throughout the province from restaurant owners and various fast-food outlets, that we in fact consider the possibility of eliminating the sales tax on any meal that is served in non-licensed premises, regardless of whether it is \$3.25 or \$5.25. And that move, Mr. Speaker, I think would help to streamline the sales tax collection system because it would eliminate completely a number of tax accounts, and I think it would be a move which would probably have no greater impact on our provincial sales tax revenues than the simple raising of the value limit on the meal. But it would have the advantage of forever, shall we say, if forever is a proper word, protecting some of the family-oriented restaurants, the fast-food restaurants, which do not have a liquor licence in the province. And that is where I think we'd find the greatest amount of casual employment and employment of students and part-time work that is available to high school students, university students, etc., etc., is in the fast food chain.

So I think consideration of removing the sales tax from all meals served in non-licensed restaurants would achieve all the purposes that the Member for Wolseley would hope to achieve in bringing this resolution before the House. But would also serve to streamline the sales tax collection in the province, it would eliminate a number of accounts — I'm quite sure the restaurant owner that my colleague, the Member for Crescentwood mentioned, the Grain Exchange restaurant, where he collects presently some \$75.00 to \$50.00 on a quarterly basis — it would eliminate his particular restaurant from the sales tax collection roles entirely. And I would certainly think that would have to not only save him a considerable amount of time in accounting and bookkeeping, but also, Mr. Speaker, might save the Department of Finance a certain amount of personnel time involved in calculating that particular tax account, which is not that many dollars per year, but I

submit, Mr. Speaker, may well be one of the larger tax accounts in that bracket of non-licensed restaurants. I know certainly that a number of the restaurants in my constituency, in rural Manitoba, probably wouldn't collect \$50.00 on a yearly basis from sales tax on food, that is the non-licensed restaurants. And removal of the sales tax completely on those restaurants would certainly benefit them in terms of bookkeeping time expended in records straight, and I think would remove some of the credit accounts — the sales tax credit accounts from the Department of Finance.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would give support to the Member for Wolseley's resolution. I'm not certain whether I would support that resolution, as it presently stands, in going to the \$5.00 immediately. I think a fair amount of persuasion can be added to the argument of raising it to \$4.00 at present, and I would give serious consideration in supporting that.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

MR. SPEAKER: Resolution No. 5. The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. JORGENSEN: I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if honourable members would be disposed to calling it 5:30 p.m. at this point.

MR. SPEAKER: The hour being 5:30. Before I leave the Chair I think there might be some misapprehension about a little irregularity in the procedure when we went into Private Members' Hour. The House will sit in Committee in both this Chamber and Room 254 at 8:00 p.m. The hour being 5:30 I'm leaving the Chair and the House will resume at 8:00 p.m. in Committee.