

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

9:30 o'clock, Thursday, May 9, 1968

Opening Prayer by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Presenting Petitions

Reading and Receiving Petitions

Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees

Notices of Motion

Introduction of Bills

Orders of the Day

Committee of the Whole House.

HON. GURNEY EVANS (Provincial Treasurer)(Fort Rouge): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable the Attorney-General, 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.

MR. SPEAKER presented the motion and after a voice vote declared the motion carried, and the House resolved itself into a Committee of Supply with the Honourable Member for Arthur in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

MR. CHAIRMAN: Committee proceed. The Department of Health. The Honourable Leader of the New Democratic Party was speaking last night.

MR. RUSSELL PAULLEY (Leader of the New Democratic Party)(Radisson): . . . to say yesterday evening in respect of the retarded patients at Portage, and I was including in my general remarks the matter of St. Amant Hospital at the same time in order that possibly the Minister in his reply might be able to consider both of these hospitals at the same time, and if I recall correctly, I had indicated that while some progress had been made over the last number of years there was still a big job to be done and that the facilities are in dire need of improvement, particularly at Portage. I made reference, if I recall correctly, to Atkinson Hall, which I think has served its purpose, but that there has to be an expanded program of building conducted at the Portage Hospital and that there should be provision for recreational facilities and also for educational facilities as well. I had posed the question jointly to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Education seeing as now the education of the retardate, as I understand it, was in the jurisdiction of the Minister of Education, that it seems to me that there is need and dire need for improvement in the educational facilities, particularly at Portage Home, because the chronological age of the patients at the hospital are higher of course than at St. Amant.

So I'd like to hear from either or both of my honourable friends as to what the plans are. I know that the auxiliaries, particularly the auxiliary at Portage, have been interested and concerned for some considerable period of time as to the lack of recreational facilities and have made presentations to the Minister of Health, as indeed of course the parents' auxiliary of the St. Amant Ward in respect of that particular hospital.

There is also the question of admissions. It seems to me that there is a growing number of people who desire to have their children placed, or their charges - some of them are not children - placed in the respective hospitals, and according to the information that I'm able to obtain, the hospital, particularly at Portage, originally was supposed to hold somewhere just below 900. There's 1,100 there at the present time, and while we appreciate some growth by the provision of two or three cottage-type structures that hold about 60 persons - I think there are four now - it hasn't really taken up the slack and I think from my information that we're losing ground at the present time. It is my understanding at the St. Vital Hospital, where the St. Amant Ward is, that on the completion of extensions in the St. Boniface Hospital complex on Tache Avenue in the City of St. Boniface that there will be some transferred from the St. Vital complex to St. Boniface complex which will take up some of the slack, but only of a temporary nature.

I'm sure that the Minister is aware that a number of times I have received complaints from people, who unfortunately have retarded children, that the only available place at the present time due to age is at the Portage Home. It is rather difficult for a lot of people to go out to Portage, and in the case that I have in mind it's a person who happens to be on social aid, have no transportation facilities, would have to rely on friends to make visitations

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(MR. PAULLEY cont'd.) to Portage, and that simply because of age and lack of accommodation in the Greater Winnipeg area that I think a number of people are in this particular situation.

We have in the field of mental health endeavoured, or considered the development of more close community hospitals of a smaller nature than the institutional type of course that we have at Portage la Prairie, and I would like if the Minister would outline what the propositions are for the immediate future for taking care of this growing number of retardates that we have at the present time. I know that the auxiliaries both of St. Amant and of Portage la Prairie are most anxious to hear from the Minister and are awaiting his statement in this House in keen anticipation. I know that representations have been made to my honourable friend the Minister of Health, and possibly due to pressure of business or pressure of time there has been some delay in meeting with the personnel or executive of the auxiliaries. I think I should pay a compliment to the auxiliaries of both of these hospitals. I think they are doing a fine job, and it's my understanding that one of the parent groups have under consideration and in plans at the present time to undertake direct contributions insofar as construction is concerned for aiding in the provision of some of the facilities. They're reasonable people, as I'm sure that the Minister is fully aware, they're reasonable people and very conscious of the costs involved and they want to do their part if they can too. And so we would pay a tribute to the parent associations and to the auxiliaries to these two hospitals, as indeed of course, Mr. Chairman, we pay a tribute to the Superintendent at Portage la Prairie, Dr. Glen Lowther, and also his staff and personnel, and to the sisters in the St. Amant Ward in the St. Vital Hospital complex.

But I'm sure in conclusion at this point, Mr. Chairman, that we would like to hear from the Minister as to the present situation, the plans for the future, and any advice that he may be able to give to us in this very important field of human endeavour that's growing in proportion to the rest of the population.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Health.

HON. CHARLES H. WITNEY (Minister of Health)(Flin Flon): I appreciate the manner in which the Honourable the Leader of the NDP has approached this subject, and in speaking to it it's a little difficult to know where to begin, except perhaps to share with him the good feeling that I have toward the auxiliaries for the work that they have done. They have done a considerable amount of work, and if it was ever added up into dollars and cents it would rather astound, I think, the members of the Committee. But apart from the dollars and cents aspect, what it has meant to the people who are in the facility out there has been much more over a period of time than the simple dollars and cents and the simple buying of a bit of furniture or some recreational equipment here.

He asked in the first question the other day what we intend to do about Portage. I would like to point out that while I made reference to the two cottages - and I do not intend to go back over the past ten years or so - that those two cottages that the Honourable the Leader of the NDP mentioned will provide for about 30 people per cottage, so that's another 60 people that we have under the cottage system. The first of these two cottages will be opened up next week; it's being staffed; and the next will be opened up, I believe inside of about a week or two, so the four housing 120 people will be in operation.

But it is not particularly the housing of 120 people which becomes the important point. The important point is that the 120 people that are being placed in the facility are easing the strain on the main portion of the building. These are basically people to whom rehabilitation techniques can be applied, and we can increase the turnover of the people who flow through the Portage la Prairie training school. We hope as much as possible to lay the major emphasis on the training and vocational rehabilitation of these people, because we have found that with many of these cases we are able either to place them on a fully sustaining basis back into the community or on a partially sustaining basis back into the community. I just noted the figure that we had last year was about 117 discharges. They came from the Portage la Prairie facility.

Now discharges a few years ago were unknown really, but in the new methods that have been launched in dealing with the problem of mental retardation and the educable and the trainable retarded child, we are now able to discharge and we are now able to have more of a flow through the facility than we had before. It is the intention to use St. Amant Ward and Portage la Prairie operating as a combined unit to provide for as much as possible a flow of

(MR. WITNEY cont'd.) those that we can rehabilitate and to bring back - to repeat myself - either fully sustaining or partially sustaining into the community.

As the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition knows, with respect to the severely handicapped child, the multiply handicapped child, we are now working with St. Amant Ward on functional plans for a two-hundred placement facility. Now when that is developed, after that then we will be able to more or less separate the different types of problems that we have, because Portage has the problem of the multiply handicapped child as well. We know that with the multiply handicapped child that the most that you can do for them is just keep them as humanely as possible, but for the other children you have hope in providing some form a flow through physiotherapy, occupational therapy, and the teaching through special types of courses, to get these people into a happier frame of life and to the point where they are not a complete burden upon society.

Now the Minister of Education advised me just now that at the present time we have 13 teachers from the Department of Education teaching at the Portage School. We do not send any of our - I hesitate to use the term "in-patients" - but the people who are at the school, we do not send them out into the Portage system. The Portage school system, as with all of the divisions now, are taking care of the educable and the trainable retarded child, and I think some of the figures that the Minister of Education has in his book show that there has been a considerable improvement take place in the situation since the new educational policies came into effect on a mandatory basis through the divisions at the beginning of September of 1967. We, in turn, in the Department of Health have got four extra people so there's a total, as I understand it, of 17 people now in the training of the educable and the trainable retarded child in the Portage la Prairie facility. The Minister is going to be hiring more staff this year and some of it is going to the school at Portage and some of it is going to St. Amant Ward and some of it's going to other areas of which I am not familiar.

With respect to the physical renovations of the facilities at Portage la Prairie, as I mentioned, I don't think there's any need to go through it again because I touched on it the other day when the Honourable the Member for St. Boniface spoke about the matter, but we have considerable renovations planned for this year in this - they call it North Grove now, I think my honourable friend knows it as the Atkinson Buildings - there's North Grove and West Grove, and these are the areas where we have the very severely handicapped people. We have begun this year, and we began down in the basement over the past year to try to relieve, what I agreed is right, that barrack-type of environment that we have had in there over the years. I haven't liked it either.

Now down below we have, with the Parents' Association, been trying out new types of environment or furniture within the area to show just what these people can handle. There has been many people thought that they would just ruin or break up anything that you put in there, but we are finding it the same as we are finding in mental health that people react to the type of environment that they are in, no matter really -- I can't say no matter what level of intelligence they have, but for the most part the educable and the trainable, and even what is termed the low grade of people, react to the type of environment that they are in and we are endeavoring in this year to relieve that barrack-type of existence that has been prevalent before.

We're doing it through some little different method. We're going to be renovating the structure but we're also doing it in just the simple matter of provision of showers and toilet facilities that are not the type that we have out there at the present time. It's been learned - and I'm just repeating over and over again - it's learned the people of this level will react to good facilities being provided for them, and over this next year and the year following we intend to erode as fast as we can on the barrack-like activity that the honourable member speaks of out at Portage la Prairie.

I admit that there is a lot to be done, but also I would say that we have made progress and we have come quite a long way. If I go into the facility now and see the effects of -- I forget which area it is now - where the renovations were made and were put into effect within the past nine months or about a year, if I see what has taken place with the two cottages that are operating and the lessons that we learned there are being transmitted into the cottages that we have now, the overall situation at Portage la Prairie has considerably improved.

But if I were to be given a priority right now, the priority will be staffing, and we are doing our level best to increase our staff out at the Portage la Prairie School. If we have

(MR. WITNEY cont'd.) staff in order to keep — first of all just for the maintenance of the facilities, staff to keep the facilities clean, etc., but also staff for keeping these people occupied. Boredom affects them in the same way that it affects us. You get all kinds of weird effects from boredom, and with this staffing, the increase in the staffing which we are going to be doing, it will — well, I'm just losing words — it will improve the situation considerably;

The Honourable the Leader of the NDP asked a question; is there a growing number of people wanting admission? I think there is, but not to the extent that we might imagine the growing number of people who want admission would be, and it's because we are now getting a flow through the facility. When we are able to discharge 117, we are able to admit another 117. But there's been another factor which has entered into the picture within the last year or two, and that is that the staff of the Portage School are now travelling. The staff of the Portage School are now travelling throughout the province to a greater extent than they were to try to aid the situation so that the trainable and educable children can be helped with the community, and in these estimates there is provision here for the establishment of passes through the Manitoba Association of Retarded Children for pre-school and post-school.

Now the Department of Education is taking care of the school age, the physical school age of the educable and the trainable retarded children. We are now moving into the area of the pre-school and the post-school, but it will be done only in the type of unit that is approved by the Department of Health, and the Department of Health will have a say as to the type of child which will go through these facilities. We will work entirely through the Manitoba Association of Retarded Children, not with each individual group but through that group.

Now the end effect of that will be that we will, and not overnight, but we will be able to begin to catch a lot of these people before they need to go into a facility such as Portage, and over the period of about five years I think our admission problems will be eased to a considerable extent because of what you might call preventive work, and I'm not using prevention in the term of preventing mental retardation but of finding early the cases of retardation and being able to work with them earlier than we have been in the past.

On the matter of prevention, the Guthrie test is, as I mentioned at the beginning of the estimates, is beginning to be a very important measure in prevention of mental retardation. I personally think that in time the Guthrie test will be able to lead to the finding of more of the genetic abnormalities which cause mental retardation, and while they might not be able to cure it they might be able to, through family counselling, bring about a preventive measure to stop the incidence of mental retardation from occurring. I forget the figures — the figures are fairly stable at the present time in any community, so the number of retarded children that are being born are not increasing; it's about the same level for a given population as it has been for a period of years.

What we are finding though is because of the newer attitude, and I'd like to say because of the interest of people like yourself, that more people are coming for help earlier. You can say that we're not quite ready for the heavy influx that we've got, but still we are, I suppose to use the term, tooling up for the job gradually and I think in time that with the staff that we have and with the facilities that we've got and the program that is being developed, that we will be able to handle it.

I would like to draw to the honourable members' attention something which may not appear on the surface to have had any effect on the school itself, but we've paved the roads. We did so after the Association asked for it, and I remember saying to myself, well if you spend money in paving roads around the facility, would it not be better to put your money into this recreation hall that they were thinking about? The paving of the roads has added again an overall improvement to the environment, but it's also added very greatly to the maintenance of the facilities and to the movement of people back and forth to what we have, including the patients or the students at the Manitoba School. And I think that's about all I have to say.

MR. PAULLEY: and on the question of paving, there's no doubt at all that as a result of the black-topping of pretty well the whole area it has improved the situation immensely and sort of toned up the facilities, and it was deeply appreciated.

However, I would like to make a comment. If I understood the Minister correctly, he said that — or indicated that the population, the content was almost levelling off, that some go because of the changes in methodology, yet this doesn't seem to me to be borne out in some of the statistics that I have received in respect of the hospital. Quoting now from a letter that the Auxiliary received insofar as the Manitoba School is concerned; Admissions —

(MR. PAULLEY cont'd.) January to September, 1967 - there were 118 admissions and only 79 discharges, so in that period of time from January to September of last year there was an overall increase of 39 residents, and then in the first nine months of 1966, according to figures produced here last year, there were 96 admissions and 67 discharges, an increase of 29. I can't quite reconcile the figures of my honourable friend when he says that it's pretty well level because indications are, to me at least, that it has increased.

Now as far as the question of the school is concerned and the co-operation between the Department of Health and the Department of Education, I'd like to find out from my honourable friend the Minister of Education, in co-operation with the Minister of Health, would it not be possible -- the Minister mentioned, Mr. Chairman, a vocational training and preparation for some contribution either in a full or a part-time basis of the patients in the hospital in active engagement in occupations that would assist them. Is it not possible for the Province of Manitoba, in the interests of the education of the educable retardates coupled with the need for recreational activity which I am sure that the Minister will recognize is needed at Portage, would it not be possible to utilize the joint program between the federal authority and the province in the provision of vocational training schools and have it located at Portage la Prairie, on location, so that we would be able, through the utilization of additional school facilities, also provide on the complex of the Manitoba school recreational facilities and utilize the grants that are available, as I understand it, under our vocational training programs. I think in this way we would be able to accomplish two desirable or needed facilities, additional school facilities coupled with the provision of auditoria and gymnasiums for the benefit of the whole area of the Portage Home.

I wonder if either one or both the Ministers could comment on that as to whether or not this might be possible. There is, or was, sums of money set aside by the federal authorities for vocational training. I think this could be considered as vocational training in that light, and at the same time aid in providing facilities at the Portage Home.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Rhineland.

MR. JACOB M. FROESE (Rhineland): I do have have a few points that I'd like the Minister to consider. One has to do with the workshops that are presently being set up, and some of them have functioned in connection with the schools of retardates. I think that the ones that we have locally throughout the province are probably called a little different name - I forget the name that they are called - but anyway we have one of this type of workshop at Winkler now where the people that attended these classes are now performing some useful work. These shops were set up on a voluntary basis - I think the local people contributed towards this - and they are also at the same time able to pay these people a small amount of money and this makes them feel that they're more useful to society. Rather than being a burden on society, they're now of some use and they've made many many of these rubber mats from automobile tires. They bring them in from the city and they're used out there and cut up and these people are then working on them and making these mats. Quite a number of these are adult retardates and I think there's also some of the older children participating in this work. But I think this is very valuable indeed because they get this feeling of being an asset to society rather than to be a burden, and this is what it is.

The shop at Winkler is drawing people from a large extended area. It's not just local people working in there, they're getting these retardates from an extended area. However, I hear there is a proposition being considered that this workshop be relocated and enlarged and probably combined with the Eden Mental Health Centre, at least put on those same grounds and that some of those patients might also come in and do some work at the same time. I would like to hear from the Minister whether consideration is being given to this and what the proposition might be. I think this is of importance, and because the training of school children of the retardates is under the Department of Education, could he give us some indication as to the line of demarcation of jurisdiction? It seems to me there's a certain amount of overlapping here, and could he outline to us just what part comes under the Department of Education and what part comes under the Department of Health.

If I might, I would like to make one or two comments in connection with the Mental Health. I know this is under another item but I think it ties in with this one. I note from the report on Page 20 - the Annual Report on Page 20 - and I would like to read one or two sentences here. "The increased emphasis on treatment needs of the individual has materially assisted persons who need such care. Under the Act, the number of voluntary admissions has steadily increased

(MR. FROESE cont'd.) so that now about three-quarters of all admissions are without compulsion." I think this is to a large extent the secret of the success that we're having in the mental health field, that no longer do these people feel once they go to an institution of this type that this is going to be a life sentence and that this is where they're going to be for the rest of their life. As a result, you have less reluctance to enter these institutions and they are more or less treated like you're going to a hospital. I think this is a big improvement and this is one of the reasons, I think, why we've had success in the institutions such as we now have at Winkler where people go quite freely for relief just like they would go to the hospital, and they receive relief. I know of several cases where they were, in my opinion they were serious cases, and yet within a matter of weeks they were able to be back and join society and be well again.

So, Mr. Minister, could you probably enlighten us on the one or two points that I was raising before?

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're on Resolution — oh, pardon me. The Member for St. John's.

MR. SAUL M. CHERNIACK, Q.C. (St. John's): Mr. Chairman, last year I had an opportunity with other members of our caucus to visit both the Portage Home and Headingley Jail in one day, and I felt that I had a traumatic experience having gone through the Portage Home. We visited the Headingley Jail first and I felt there were a number of criticisms I had of the physical facilities that were offered there and I made mental notes about things that I would bring to the attention of the Attorney-General which I thought were verging on the inhuman, but any thoughts that I had about improvements that were required in Headingley Jail were quickly dispelled when I spent the balance of the day in the Portage Home.

I might say in passing there was reference also made to the Brandon Jail — which is apparently one of the oldest institute physical structures in the province in the institutional field — and although it's old, it's a beautiful place, kept very clean and very neat and tidy compared with — no, I shouldn't put it in the same sense of neat and tidy — but it's a fine building for its purpose compared with the facilities that are being offered in the older portions of the Portage Home. My first reaction was to say that there are buildings there, in the Atkinson Hall mainly, that I would have said tear it down immediately and replace it. Well, that was from the impact of seeing the crowded conditions of so many individuals living so close together that, as I recall it, you couldn't put a chair between the beds they were that close together. The Honourable Minister mentioned some of the improvements in the washing, the lavatory facilities. They were strikingly inadequate and not related to the needs for the people that were there.

I must say in passing that one of the most marked things about the visit was the loving attention that I felt was shown by the staff, by the senior staff, by Dr. Lowther, but about all the people working there seemed to have a real feeling for the people with whom they were working and seemed to have a dedication in what really is a very unpleasant and largely unrewarding task.

We talk here about various things that have to be done in this province; we're critical of the government in so many respects; we talk about priorities, as does the Minister; and I could find difficulty in saying, well I would set aside certain things that are important in our province to provide better or larger facilities in the mental health services field, because the truth is that so many of the — residents I think they're called there — of the persons that are resident there, so many of them are beyond a feeling for their physical surroundings but so many of them react so well when they have the comfort and attention which they get there.

I wouldn't say that we shouldn't build an art centre and we should build a further mental institution; I would not say we should stop building schools and we should spend it there; I would not say we should stop building elderly persons' housing or housing in general for that; because I think these are important and affect many more people, and in the long-range very important for the future of the province and in developing people and helping them — I'm talking now in the educational and cultural field — and in making them more productive citizens of Manitoba. And in the field of housing of the elderly persons, of the deprived, — let's say the Indian and Metis — it is vital that we have it, but the problem of the care of people who are in the Portage Home is one which is not the problem of those inmates alone but that of so many members of their families when they are not in the Home.

When we talk about what is important for a child to get into the home, to get into the environment of the home, to be with children and people of his own mental capacity, that's very

(MR. CHERNACK cont'd.) important for that child; but it is equally important for the two, three, four people who are in his intimate family, who share the home with him, who have to be constantly aware of a problem that exists in the home, a problem which affects the mental health of all the persons who have to live with that person and adjust to that person.

I appreciate very much, firstly, the efforts that have been made by the staff that work in the field; secondly, I appreciate what appears to be the Minister's difficulty in trying to work towards a better accommodation and trying to work towards a better service, and when he says it's important to set a priority in staffing, that's obvious. Buildings alone will not do the job, but staffing alone will not do the job if the children aren't there - or the people - it's not confined to children.

So that in his own department he apparently has to set priorities, and the priority which he has set I can understand as being satisfactory, but I cannot accept the fact that there are hundreds of people on the waiting list. This to me is bad. I would rather see a duplication of the Atkinson Home filled than to see children and people who have to be there and who are in the homes throughout Manitoba and affecting multiples of their numbers in the home environment and the school environment and the neighbourhood environment where they exist.

I would like to think of this government - no, I'm not sure that I can think that this government is prepared to really step in and do something for these people. I see no reason why, when we formerly borrowed money to build roads and were agreeable to pay it over the long haul, that we are not prepared to go in debt for the money that's needed to provide the facilities for these limited number - and I think that the figure is around 400, and I know that's a lot of money in capital expenditure - but to get those people into the Home, and I'm assuming that they belong there because they are on the waiting list. When I see letters and interview people, which I have done - and yesterday the Honourable Member for St. Boniface was kind enough to show me a letter which he had from a parent - to me it is a tear-jerking thing to read the problem not of the person on the waiting list but the problem in the family that takes place because of that. When one reads the correspondence of this person with the department, with the people in charge of selection of those who go in, we find what may almost be a callousness develops in their reaction where you see a letter saying that it appears that the problem is not the Mongoloid child as much as the emotional disturbance of the mother, and we find there a medical opinion given that the mother is emotionally disturbed because she can't cope with the Mongoloid child. This to me is not good enough.

I mentioned highways. I remember a number of years ago suggesting that the government was rushing ahead with a program which I didn't see was so essential, and that is the Perimeter around the Metropolitan Winnipeg. I travelled it recently and it was bare land on both sides of that perimeter for most of it. When I looked at the intersections, the elaborate intersections in which millions of dollars have been spent, I am not prepared to say that I would rather see improved highways than to see proper structures erected for people in this field of mental health. I would rather hear complaints about potholes in various highways in Manitoba than to learn about the number of people that are waiting to get into these institutions, and as I say, it's not the people alone, it's the families that come in contact with them and who suffer by their presence.

I would rather hear less bragging from this government about the road construction program it's done, of being able to connect all the towns together with first-class highways, and I'd rather hear this government brag about what is being done in this field which I think is so necessary. I wish the people of Manitoba would be encouraged to travel through the institutions of this province for them to see the conditions under which the staff - which I believe is dedicated - have to work; and to meet the parents of the people who are waiting for members of their family to be admitted to understand what it is. I would like to feel that this Minister would have the support of the government, that the Minister of Highways would come along and would say, "We've spent enough on highways, let's get some work done in this field." I'd like this government to say, "We are prepared to borrow some money to get the construction done to make it possible for these children to come in", because when the 120 new residents are brought into the Portage Home because of a new construction this year, that will not relieve the crowded situation in Portage one bit. The beds will not be put one inch further apart because of that, because as I understand it, it's being filled immediately from the waiting list.

The crowded condition which results in too close contact between the people which

(MR. CHERNIACK cont'd.) creates health hazards - if the Minister knows what I'm talking about - is something that has to be attended to, and just to build enough homes, enough beds, enough buildings to take care of part of the waiting list, is not good enough and there should be a crash program in that, and then I wouldn't be as critical of the Attorney-General for being so slow about the Vaughan Street Home if I thought something else was being done that was important.

But we're not finding that kind of progress. We're finding the showy kind of thing; we're finding the politically expedient kind of a thing; we're finding that road building is still prominently being bragged about by this government; but those nooks and crannies in this province where living beings are tucked away, where souls are being kept until they die in little areas that people don't see and don't know about, are the places that need attention. The fact that they're not visible to the people of Manitoba is the fault of the government, because the people have to be made aware of the needs and of the situation so that the people will demand that something be done, because with all the good intentions that our Minister may have, he'll get nowhere unless his colleagues and Cabinet are made aware of what is the problem.

I'd very much like to know how many members of this Cabinet have visited those places, have seen the conditions under which Manitobans are living, Manitobans who cannot help themselves. We hear a great deal of talk about we mustn't go out and do everything for others, they have to learn to do for themselves. That doesn't apply to these people on whose behalf I am now speaking. I'd like to know whether the Minister of Highways, who I think has a tremendous budget here, has been out there and would not say, "Take a few million dollars off my budget and put it into health where something can be done and has to be done." Of course alongside of that has to be a training facility for the staff, to train more staff, and probably there has to be something done about salaries because I think that they are in the lowest paid bracket of a very demanding, unpleasant and difficult assignment.

I enquired from ministers of government as to various costs involved in the per diem cost in Manitoba Institutions - and I should thank the Ministers of Education, Welfare, the Attorney-General and the Minister of Health for the prompt replies - and there is nothing terribly striking about the costs. They seem to vary in the sense of the relative needs. I do find though that at Portage, Brandon and Selkirk, in the Ministry of Health, the average per diem per patient cost is \$9.00; whereas the non-governmental facilities supported by the province are all higher. The St. Amant Ward at the St. Vital Hospital - \$12.40; Ninette Sanatorium - \$14.50; the Central T. B. Clinic - \$16.25 plus a grant; and the Eden Mental Health Centre - \$10.95. Each is more than the government-operated institution; each is substantially higher than that which is the responsibility of this government and one must say that there's something wrong. Are people in the direct care of the government being treated less well than they are in the private institutions, are the private institutions costing too much for the services they give? I don't know, but it seems to be wrong that the government should be spending less per person than the private institutions are. There should be an explanation of which I'm not aware.

We find that in the correctional institutions the average generally is lower than the \$9.00, and I would think that that's understandable because in the correctional institutions it's protection that's needed, not treatment. And in the elderly persons' accommodations we also find the costs generally are less than the \$9.00. But \$9.00 is not very much to spend, and when one goes through Portage and sees how every penny is measured and cut and split - and I've seen it; I've discussed it with the people that look after the provision of food in the institution. The can of paint, it seems to me, is being measured to see how thinly it can be spread to provide the facilities. Nothing in what I have said is in criticism of the people involved in the institution, nor of the Minister unless the Minister in his own conscience feels that he has not done enough selling in his own Cabinet to get the money that he needs for this purpose. Because I think there are not enough pressures on the government to do a job, and I think there have been more pressures on the Premier, the former Highways Minister, to do the obvious thing like building roads, than there have been to build and smoothen the lives of these people, many of whom can be helped and many of whom will live out their lives in the institution.

I wish there was something I could say to give the Minister the ammunition he needs to provide the needs which I think he knows are there, and which I think are not adequately met. I only hope that the people involved, the parents and the friends of the inmates of these

(MR. CHERNIACK cont'd.).... institutions, will be able to organize strongly enough to do a more effective job of pressure, because that's what I think this government bows to best; and if they get enough pressure from these people they will realize that they have to give the Minister of Health the means whereby he can do the job which I believe he sincerely wants to do in this field.

MR. FROESE: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Honourable Member for St. John's would be willing to table those letters so that we could get copies of the per diem rates. I think this

MR. CHERNIACK: I'd be glad to table to my friend. Okay. Well whatever is required, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Boniface.

MR. LAURENT DESJARDINS (St. Boniface): Mr. Chairman, I wish to congratulate the last member that spoke for the clarity of his statement, and I think that he explained very clearly and fully the problems of this House, the problem that we have in this. I might say that this is exactly what I was trying to say yesterday, not in detail of course like he did, and if it's any help to the Minister I wish to say that of course we, the members of this Party, agree with the words of the last spokesman. So, knowing this, maybe we could start by putting pressure right here and that all the members should, and this is something that the Minister will never be criticized if he's spending money on these people. This is something that society must do. This is not something that you'll get the money back maybe in a certain way as clearly as other ways, but this is a "must" and it should be done.

Now I don't intend to repeat everything that has been said; I couldn't say it as well. But we agree with this 100 percent. I would, however, like to say to the Minister who felt that he should come to the defence of Dr. Johnson yesterday, that I'm not debating all that Dr. Johnson did. Maybe he did some good work - I don't know anything about that. I'm concerned with the - I think this is inexcusable that a doctor should try to diagnose the mother of a patient without being requested to do so, and especially when she has her own doctor. I protest against this. This is the only thing that I wanted to bring out, and as I did say, and it seems very clear, the Minister read this letter and you could see how long this family has been in trouble and all that they had to go through because of this child, and I said that it seemed to be a personality clash that is obvious to me.

And there is another thing that I would like to say to the Minister, and this I protest very strongly, is that anyone at any time in any of the departments of the government should resent or scold people for going to their member, for going to the MLA. This is what we're here for. We've been told by members of the government side that we were the ombudsmen; and this lady was scolded - to put it mildly. Certain members in the department of the Minister stated that they didn't like the idea of her going to somebody else, going to the MLA, and this is certainly something wrong. I'm sure the Minister doesn't agree with them and I think that this should be brought to the attention, not only in this department but all the departments.

Now in closing on this, I think that in this case we should deal with this particular case because this woman and this family has suffered too much, and I would just like the Minister to tell me exactly when he feels that one of these new cottages will be opened, and can he guarantee that that particular child will be going there and then will he be with people of his own age? This is the main thing, because the child is so small he has been refused in St. Amant for a number of years until now he's too old to qualify. I know the statement has been made that they are older people but I don't think that we should play one against the other. But the big thing now is that that child is with grown-ups from anywhere from up to 80-year-olds. I want to know what the Minister intends to do on this at least in order that I could answer this mother who's quite concerned. So I wonder if the Minister could have someone..

MR. PHILIP PETURSSON (Wellington): Mr. Chairman, I would also like to add a few words to what has been said about the Home for Retardates at Portage la Prairie and the general work being done in that area, and I would say that I can't agree more with what my honourable colleague has said. I was on the same trip as he was when we went through the hospital, or the Home for Retardates at Portage la Prairie, and I too, as he was, was deeply moved by what I saw; the very great difficulties under which the people, the staff, works in that institution. I was moved also by the dedication that they all seem to show. I was told while there that there are some young women who come in on a temporary basis to work with

(MR. PETURSSON cont'd.) these children - some who are not children; they have really reached adult age - and they've become attached to one or more or several of these people and they determine to, or decide to stay on and if not make it a full-time or a lifelong career, at least spend far more time there than what they had originally intended.

I have over the years been very closely associated with the problem that is presented by the children who are in this institution. I had a daughter who suffered in the same way. They used to call it spastic paralysis; it is now cerebral palsy, and there are many varying degrees of the difficulty under which they suffer. And I have become aware over the years of many others in similar situations where parents found it very difficult, if not altogether impossible, to send their children to what they call an institution, and they felt that they were not being true to their responsibility, and homes have been very much dislocated by the fact of having a patient who had to be under continual care in the home. In that way, by relieving that situation and giving people the recognition that good care is being given to these children, many homes are saved the difficulty and the heartbreak that otherwise is experienced. It is a heartbreak to have to send children in those circumstances away from home into an institution, but it becomes a necessity on occasion to, well, in effect it's for the mental health of the people who are involved in looking after patients of this sort and feeling the complete and total frustrations which they must endure.

I have visited an institution on Long Island in New York. It was run by a Dr. Carlson who himself was a spastic; that is, he suffered from the physical or muscular difficulties which are created by this ailment, but mentally I think he was very alert. After several operations he was enabled to walk; the tendons in his legs were eased up or cut so that he could walk, not with a normal gait, but nevertheless walk with the assistance of canes. He went through medical college at the University of Chicago and in another university where it was suggested to him that this be his specialty. And he had a school at East Hampton on Long Island and in the wintertime he went down to Florida - I don't remember the name of the place - Pompano Beach I think it was, and he took all of the children who were in - they were boarding there; they were being taught and instructed and trained and being boarded. It was a very expensive operation for those who sent their children there but it was a very effective thing that he was achieving. From force of necessity he had to be selective in the children that he took in. Some had already reached early adult age. But he was doing a good job and he was giving the people that he was working with confidence in themselves, confidence which was overriding the handicaps from which they were suffering.

Many of these people, while almost completely physically crippled, still are rather mentally alert, and this is part of the tragedy of the situation, that mentally alert people are encased as in a cage with the inability to move about even to do simple little things for themselves that ordinarily healthy people would be doing, and I feel that the institution at Portage la Prairie is, even within the limitations that are imposed upon it by lack of funds, lack of space, lack of facilities and lack of help, is doing an exceptional job of which we, I think, can be justly proud. The pity of it is that it is limited by these several things that I have mentioned, and I would, as my honourable colleague has said, I would far rather drive over a few potholes in the roads and probably see one or two other areas neglected to some degree, that more money might be spent on the institution and the aid and the assistance and the training of the people who happen to be in that unfortunate circumstance of having to be in the institution at Portage la Prairie; that is, of having become victims of an ailment over which, of course, they had no control. And I would urge upon the government and upon the Honourable the Minister of Health, much as he may feel that he is doing now, to put on even greater pressure that he might have the resources made available to him to do even more and even greater and even better work. I think that the province would be well served. It isn't an area that is generally - the public is not generally aware except in a vague kind of way. It isn't always politically expedient to be spending money on things which are not politically obvious or give a political advantage. But advantage or no, this institution is one that should be given every opportunity of developing and moving on.

I would, just in closing these few remarks, I would pay special tribute to Dr. Lowther of the institution who is in charge there, who has a great feeling for the work that he is doing and is in every sense a dedicated man.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution 35 (d)(1) . . .

HON. GEORGE JOHNSON (Minister of Education)(Gimli): sorry the Leader of the

(MR. JOHNSON cont'd.) New Democratic Party slipped out for a minute. Specifically, I think he was asking whether or not the vocational types of monies might be made available for the development of workshop facilities or occupational workshop type of facility, but on the grounds of the mental hospitals, and we've been advised by my staff and by my people who have brought this matter up at the federal level, that this was not contemplated. This is becoming very complex because we're more and more trying to work into the regular system, as members know, the concept of trying to keep as many slow learners, the educable retarded group and slow learner group, in the main stream of the school system instead of ever segregating.

I think the story in Manitoba in the last couple of years is most dramatic in the sense that we now have something over, trainable retarded training is being taken over mandatorily by the divisions as of July 1, 1967. Most divisions are coping with the problem. We have an increase of up to 312 classes of trainable retarded now, operated by the various divisions. The Member from Assiniboia would know that the school divisions in that area got together last fall and created a special school for these children.

Also, the educable retarded group have increased markedly. Also the introduction of the occupational entrance course; many divisions now have job co-ordinators where this course contemplates a weakened academic approach — not weakened, or tailored — an approach tailored more to the abilities of the children, and there are many going in this in the pilot stages in Grade 10 this year. These are also slow learners who are placed for two days of the week in a job opportunity in the community. So here's our school system, not only accommodating the trainable retarded within the system itself, but offering to the educable retarded group and above the Occupational Entrance type of course, and the Special Services Branch are working, and will be working closely with the divisions who — when I come to my estimates we'll be talking about vocational education; we might work in just how more of these students can be worked into this type of facility as it's developed. But in the Occupational Entrance Course, they have them in — I think 20 divisions have embarked upon this course offering it for the group of students with actual on-the-job placement, . . . the tremendous increase in the trainable retarded field.

The department has developed a particular program for the educable retarded course. We're now in the process of refining and developing a curriculum for the trainable retarded. We've had teacher training seminars last summer and this year. I think we have about 369 teachers now in special education. As a matter of fact it's increased from 13 to 56 percent in the past year, so it's just in this past year you've had this tremendous development taking place, but specifically the kind of sheltered workshop type of vocational facility isn't contemplated as being part of the vocational program that is shared with the federal authorities.

MR. WITNEY: Mr. Chairman, just in speaking to some of the particular points that came up, especially the Honourable the Member for St. John's. As the Minister of Health I'm not satisfied with the progress that has been made; there's more to be done; but I don't know of a Minister of Health across Canada that is really satisfied with the progress that they have been able to make in dealing with this particular problem, if they are particularly normal people. We have come from an era, though of misunderstanding. It's an era of misunderstanding — you might call it a Dark Age — in dealing with this type of person. We're into a whole new outlook now, and with that whole new outlook there's had to be a whole change in attitude towards facilities to programs and to methods of doing things. We have embarked upon that now. We've been embarked upon if for some time, and as we are embarking upon it we are making progress, and as long as we are making progress my job now is to keep the progress rolling and to do more each year, as much as I possibly can — and that's what I will do.

Now, in dealing with the Winkler situation, I know of no specific — I can't really answer your question as to whether or not there's been discussion between Eden Mental Health Centre and this Winkler facility. I don't know. But I would not be surprised if there had been, because we have Skills Unlimited here in Winnipeg, we have Skills Unlimited in Selkirk, and we have the Mental Health Industries in Brandon and the Rehab Industries in Brandon, all working with the hospitals, and if there was a facility out in Winkler it will surprise me if they're not going to find some ways and means of utilizing it to help with occupational therapy for the people who are in the Eden Mental Health Centre.

On the line of demarcation, the school divisions are responsible for the education of the

(MR. WITNEY cont'd.) educable and the trainable retarded child. Now the Portage facility is another addition. It's a facility that is helping in that. It's been there for some time, and we couldn't possibly just take all the children out of there and put them back into the school divisions, but we are doing that type of work ourself with the people that we have, so we are now in addition -- we were at one time about, I suppose, the only facility that was trying to do this work except for the -- that's wrong to say the only facility; that facility and the Association for Retarded Children schools were in this training of the educable and the trainable retarded child. Now we have the school system and we have the Portage la Prairie facility, and now we're moving into the pre-school, as I mentioned, and the post-school activity which will come through the Association for Retarded Children.

The assessment of the child is being done in a variety of ways. It's gradually being built up through the Office of Child Development which we established last year, through the Child Guidance Clinics here in Winnipeg, the Child Guidance Clinic in Brandon, and through the Health Units. The Health Units are being brought more into the picture of mental retardation and mental health than we had before, because in the health units we have the doctors and the public health nurses all as a very valuable resource pool to aid in assessment, in aid in location, and in aid to the mental health people in whatever they are recommending ought to be done.

On the per diem rates - just commenting on that for a moment - on the per diem rates. The per diem rates at Eden Mental Health Centre and at St. Amant's Ward have built into them the amortization of capital and the amortization and interest of capital. When we develop new facilities at Portage la Prairie or at Selkirk or at Brandon, those are paid for directly from the Consolidated Fund of the province. There's no amortization or interest payment built into that per diem rate. That per diem rate reflects the actual cost of . . . amortization of running those facilities, and of course you recognize that Eden Mental Centre was built just a while ago, and St. Amant's Ward, the renovations that have been taking place there have been done within a recent period of time, so the per diem rates in our provincially-operated facilities do not reflect amortization of capital or interest on capital.

With respect to scolding for MLAs coming to the senior members of the staff. I did have this problem some time ago and all of our senior members are advised that an MLA has every right to make an appeal on behalf of a constituent or on anything which they feel ought to be drawn to their attention, and they are to be listened to and given a hearing.

Now the Honourable Member for St. Boniface requested that I give assurance the child he's speaking of will go into one of the schools. As I mentioned, the school is opening, the first one's opening next week, the third one (we had two operating for a period of two years - the cottages) the third cottage opens next week, the fourth one will be opening after that, but I cannot give that assurance. I have mentioned in a letter to him that they are considering placing the child in one of the new cottages. I cannot give the assurance because it would be folly for the Minister of Health to bring undue influence to bear upon the medical superintendent of any facility. When a child goes to that facility they have the responsibility, not only for that child but for all of the children, and I must place my judgment, I must place my confidence in the fact that they will do for that child and all of the children in general what they think is the best thing to do.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (Resolution 35. Section 2 (d) to (f) (3) were passed.) (f)(4)(a) -- passed; (b) --

MR. DOUGLAS CAMPBELL (Lakeside): On that (4)(a), Mr. Chairman, these I believe are the institutional farms. I wanted to ask the Minister with regard to the Portage la Prairie farm: are the farmers there, in addition to their own operations, still farming the land at the Macdonald Airport?

MR. WITNEY: Yes. There is land at the Macdonald Airport which comes under the operation of the farm at Portage la Prairie.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (The balance of Resolution 35 was read and passed. Resolution 36, Sections 3(a) to (g)(2) were read and passed.) . . .

(3)(a)--passed; (b) --

MR. NELSON SHOEMAKER (Gladstone): Mr. Chairman . . . X-ray units. Right?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Right.

MR. SHOEMAKER: I was wondering whether or not that it is possible now for all residents of Manitoba to obtain the services of the lab and X-ray facilities at the same rate,

(MR. SHOEMAKER cont'd.) or is there discrimination still in this field? Now I think at the Neepawa Health Unit that it is possible for a patient to obtain the first X-ray for a dollar and every subsequent one that day at 25 cents, and no fee at all is levied for lab. In fact I am quite certain that that is correct. And yet I have found to my sorrow two years ago - now this situation may have been cleared up in the meantime - but two years ago the Winnipeg clinics were charging \$10.00 for X-ray and \$12.00 for lab. In fact, I had to pay a bill of \$32.00, I guess it was, for two X-ray pictures and one lab - \$22.00 - that would have cost me a dollar and a half in Neepawa, so it seems to me that we have probably half of our population that are supplied with the services as offered by certain rural health units at one price, and then probably half of the population that are paying fees of a thousand percent increase. Does that situation still exist?

MR. WITNEY: Mr. Chairman, on that X-ray; on in-patients' lab and X-ray, of course, it's all across the province; on the out-patients' lab and X-ray we provide for lab and X-ray services through the rural parts of the province and have been expanding it, but not in the metropolitan area. The rate that you mentioned of \$1.25, that's applied to all lab and X-ray throughout the rural parts of the province.

MR. FROESE: Mr. Chairman, we're going rather fast; on the previous item, Health Units. Have there been any new health units established in Manitoba, and if so whereabouts? Is there one going to be established in south central Manitoba? If I'm correct they were working on it and I would like to know from the Minister whether there is one being established in the general south central area.

MR. WITNEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman. January 1st.

MR. SHOEMAKER: Mr. Chairman, I have a little bit of advice for my honourable friend that probably would save many residents of the province a lot of hard-earned cash, and if somewhere within the department my honourable friend could advise all residents of the province who are coming to the City of Winnipeg from the rural areas and going through clinics, if the doctor at the rural point would supply the Winnipeg clinics with all of the X-rays and lab tests, they wouldn't have to pay this huge fee when they come to Winnipeg. Now of course those residents of the province who are carrying Plan HCX with MMS, I suppose could care less because they're covered, but nevertheless somebody pays the shot, and I found out that my doctor will co-operate to this extent, that he will supply the Winnipeg clinics with all of the X-rays that are required and all of the lab tests that are made, and I think that this could be put into general practice. As a matter of fact, I got a bill from the Manitoba Clinic for \$37.00 about a year or so ago prior to me having HCX, for \$37.00; \$32.00 of which was straight lab and X-ray fees, \$5.00 just for consulting fees. I certainly have no quarrel with the five-dollar charge but I did have a quarrel with the 32-dollar charge when I could have got it for a dollar and a quarter, and perhaps if my honourable friend will do a little investigating he can seek co-operation between the rural doctors and the Winnipeg clinics to the extent that they could co-operate in this one field anyway.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (3)(a)--passed; (b) --passed. . . The Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain.

MR. EDWARD I. DOW (Turtle Mountain): If I might just for a moment, with regard to Health Units. I notice that the increased expenditure from last year to this year is not too much higher, but I was informed over the weekend that the allocation to various municipalities, that the increase for health units has been raised quite substantially for 1968-69. Has there been a change in the contributions or the ratio of participation, because it doesn't bear the same percentage here for expenditure as what is being charged to some of the municipalities that have called me.

MR. WITNEY: No, Mr. Chairman, there is no change in the allocation. It's roughly about one-third, one-third, one third; municipality one-third, province one-third and the new federal Health Grants one-third.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (The balance of Resolution 36, and Resolution 37 and 38 were passed). Resolution No. 39 -- passed . . .

MR. PETER FOX (Kildonan): . . . Manitoba Hospital Commission, I'd like to ask the Minister, in view of the fact that projected costs for the premiums have been planned and researched. I would also like to know whether the projected building of new hospitals is under this proposal and what those plans are. I understand that the Concordia Hospital is to be built but there has been no firm date set, and I would appreciate if the Minister would tell us this.

(MR. FOX cont'd.)

The other thing, Mr. Chairman, under this section, I believe is that if there is any research being done into the building of new hospitals, how much research has been done into the type of new hospitals to be built? I understand that there are many new kinds of facilities being built these days, some of them which require a lot less staff to service because of the nature of the construction, and of course the new technology such as TV and so on, and the other types of monitoring that can be done which would certainly alleviate the pressure that we have on the shortage of staff at the present time. I believe this is the proper section under which the Minister could possibly give us an answer on these items.

MR. WITNEY: The broad answer, Mr. Chairman, is yes. And I think if the honourable member takes a look at the forecast of costs and requirements, he will find that the building plans that are in hand for 1968 those are under construction at the present time.

With respect to the Concordia Hospital, the Concordia Hospital is now - and I can clarify this later - is now into its schematic drawings. The land, I understand, has been obtained, the site has been obtained; it is into schematic drawings and it's proceeding - it's on its way.

Now with respect to matters of research; yes, the province has been the subject of several research projects that have been set up through the Federal Government, and at the urging of the province into various matters of buildings of the physical facilities of hospitals in order to utilize as much as possible the new automated techniques that are coming into effect and to find ways and means of making better use of the staff we have available. Victoria General is perhaps one of the best examples of this type of hospital.

We were also able to bring all of the provincial architects together again through the Federal Government, through the Department of Health down there, to determine this matter of types of building, types of material, and the ways and means that costs can be cut, and they are still meeting to determine this matter, and from what I understand, there are results being obtained.

MR. FOX: outlines of the policy in respect to centralization or decentralization of the hospital especially in a large urban centre like Winnipeg where we do not need intensive care units all around the periphery of the metropolitan area, but we possibly could use some convalescent areas and emergency areas and intensive units in the central core. Could he give us an answer on that type of policy?

MR. WITNEY: speaking, Mr. Chairman, the intensive care units and that type of facility which requires a great deal of staff and requires a great deal of cost as well, is being centralized into the teaching areas of the province or the metropolitan area, and in the outskirts, as you can see, there are the development of the 250-bed facilities which would not be equipped with that type of expensive facility but would be equipped to handle what is needed of a normal type of operation in emergency, maternity and general illnesses of a population throughout that particular area. As for the actual date, I haven't got it here. I'll give it to you on Orders of the Day.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. SIDNEY GREEN (Inkster): Mr. Chairman, dealing with Resolution No. 39, there's one facet of the hospital premium administration that I'd like to take up with the Minister because it's come to my attention through practice of law in the area of domestic relations. Apparently the Department regards the husband responsible for the payment of his wife's premiums regardless of their status, unless they have finally obtained a divorce, and apparently the Department bases this attitude on the definition of the words dependent, which includes spouse. I think that the word "spouse" is meant to modify "dependent" but I really don't want to get into any legal wrangle about it; I want to discuss what in principle should be the case, because there are many people - husband and wife - who do not live together, who are single for all practical purposes except that the marriage tie has not been formally dissolved. This includes people who have entered into separation agreements. This includes people who have been separated by the Court. And the separation takes place under circumstances where it's agreed that the husband has no responsibility for the support of the wife. Now I want to make it clear, Mr. Chairman, I'm not referring to children. I'm referring to, let us say, two people who have had no children and are then separated. There may be very good reasons for a husband not wishing to have anything to do with supporting his wife, and sometimes this can arise tremendous emotional and other difficulties if he finds that the Hospital Act, regardless of the situation between the parties, regards him as being the person necessary to pay their premiums. My

(MR. GREEN cont'd.)... understanding is, that is what the department now does and, as I said, because of their interpretation of the word "dependent".

Now, first of all, Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure that their interpretation is correct, but nobody is going to have a law case about \$2.16 or whatever it is, that has to be paid. Mind you the premium has now gone up and somebody may make a stronger issue of it. But it's just not intended, as I read the Act, that a husband pay the premiums for a wife who is not his dependent, and quite often the wife could be working; they have no dependent relationship in terms of financial responsibility. Quite often there could be an order of the court separating them in which the husband is not required to support the wife, but the Department says unless there is a divorce - that is, as long as she is still his spouse - he is responsible for the entire premium.

Now, I'm not suggesting that we lose the premium, I'm suggesting that the wife pay as an individual and the husband pay as an individual in circumstances where she is not his dependent. That is not now the case. It results in a certain degree - well, a great degree of unfairness, because I don't think society arbitrarily would like to say that a man is responsible to pay the expenses of someone with whom for all practical purposes he has no relationship, and with whom perhaps the relationship may have been terminated by mutual consent under circumstances where the wife is to blame. But that is now how this is done, so first of all there is a certain amount of unfairness; secondly, I'm not satisfied that the Department is properly interpreting the reading of the Act, and I don't think it would be of great difficulty for the Department in proper circumstances to tax each of them with the premium as if they were single people. And I would appreciate it if the Minister would look into it, and if he feels that legislation is necessary, to correct this situation. There is a particular individual, Mr. Chairman, who was in my office, who is I think over 80 years of age, who has no relationship with his wife at all. She might be a far more affluent person than he is, and he has made a property settlement, and they are separated, and the Department insists that she is his dependent insofar as the Act is concerned.

MR. WITNEY: Mr. Chairman, it's an interesting point . . . and we will have the words of the Honourable Member for Inkster reviewed by the legal people at the Commission.

MR. JACOB M. FROESE (Rhineland): In connection with the Hospital Commission, on the expense sheet of the Manitoba Hospital Services Fund there's an item of \$925,000 for hospitals outside the province. I take it that these are services by the Hospital Commission outside of Manitoba and that we are paying for them. If this is the case, are the rates the same as those applied in the province of Manitoba or on what basis are these payments made outside of Manitoba?

Then there's one other point in connection with the Report of the Manitoba Hospital Commission and that has to do with the Health Resources Fund. Apparently, this is a new fund just recently set up. What is the purpose of this fund and could we have some explanation on the operation of this fund. Is there a report available on the fund itself?

MR. WITNEY: On the rates of payments for people outside of the province, we simply pay whatever the charges are levelled by the hospital, but then if our people go into Ontario or Ontario people come here, the same thing applies. There's a reciprocity between the provinces, and if it happens to be a \$40.00 per day hospital in Ontario, well we pay that. If an Ontario resident moves into a \$34.00 per day hospital, Ontario pays us for the \$34.00. There's no one set rate for across the country. This is a protection provided for people that are moving from province to province and particularly for families.

The Health Resources Fund is a fund of \$500 million. It was announced by the Federal Government. It's allocated on a per capita basis to the provinces, and about \$25 million of it goes to the Atlantic provinces. There is approximately about \$75 million kept for general national research projects and the rest of it is allocated on a per capita to the various provinces. In this province, it means about \$15 million as we see it at the present time. We were asked, because the Fund is for the teaching and research in fields of health, not only for doctors but for nurses and the other people who are in the health field, and we were all asked - all of the provinces - to put up a five and 15-year program. That was done here in conjunction with the University, the teaching hospitals and the Hospital Commission and the University Grants Commission. There is an advisory committee that meets regularly in Ottawa to assess these various five and fifteen-year programs that are submitted from the various provinces in Canada.

And as for a report, it's a Federal Government Fund and I presume that they will be

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(MR. WITNEY cont'd.)... issuing a report during the normal course of business in parliament.

MR. PHILIP PETURSSON (Wellington): May I ask a question of the Honourable Minister? The question was asked about the progress being made in the construction of the Concordia Hospital. May I seek information about the progress being made in the construction of the hospital out in the Municipal hospitals site: King George, Elizabeth and Edward?

About four years ago, I think, there was a plan projected to add a number of beds - chronic beds - to this hospital group. Later, that was changed to including or having built on that site an acute care section to that general area, so that it would form a complex of acute and chronic hospital, a complex treatment. There was of necessity some delay. The idea was accepted by the Municipal Hospital Board, I know, and by the City Council which has put up its share of the funds required for the construction of the hospital there. And I would be interested if the Honourable Minister could tell us something about what progress are they now making in the construction of the new ...

MR. FROESE: Maybe the Minister when he gets up can reply to it. The estimates show that the amount we're allocating is \$56,090,000.00. Last year this figure was \$63,265,000.00. This is considerably less than last year. However, the operation of the Commission is increasing because we are adding a premium. Could the Minister give us the total amount that will be expended by the Hospital Commission and the various ways this money will be brought about. We know that in past years the premiums amounted to roughly \$13 million. They will be increased. Could he give us the information of the total amount that will be used by the Commission and how these moneys will be brought about?

MR. WITNEY: I'll just refer the honourable member to the asterisk on Page 14, which explains that at the very bottom of the page, and also to the brochure which was forwarded around, the Forecast of Cost and Financial Requirements, and that will give him all of the information that he would like to know.

As for the Municipal hospitals, it is my understanding that they have gone past the functional phase and they are now into schematic drawings.

Just in answer to the Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain, I've been advised that in some cases the application of recoveries under the federal Health Grants were not properly applied and some buildings are now under review for possible revision.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution 39 — passed. That completes the Department of Health. Before we proceed, I'd like to thank the Member for Winnipeg Centre. He did more in five minutes than I've done in the past five days.

Department XVI - Urban Development and Municipal Affairs. The Honourable the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

.... Continued on next page.

HON. THELMA FORBES (Minister of Urban Development and Municipal Affairs) (Cypress): Mr. Chairman, before proceeding with consideration of the estimates of the Department of Urban Development and Municipal Affairs, I would like to take a few minutes to express my grateful appreciation to the staff of my department. They are unfailingly loyal, Mr. Chairman; they are hard working; and it is my pleasure to pay tribute to each and every one of them.

The function of the Department of Urban Development and Municipal Affairs is somewhat different from that of other departments of government in that we are a department that is in close daily contact with all the municipal men and women of this province, and indeed all people in the province who are interested in municipal affairs. Our various branches attempt to offer services wherever and whenever required. The job of keeping all seven branches of our department running smoothly and efficiently, Mr. Chairman, is that of my very able Deputy Mr. Charlie Chappell, whose capabilities are well known to all of you. This year, Mr. Jack McNairnay, who was previously the solicitor for the Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg, joined our staff as Deputy Minister. Many of you already know Mr. McNairnay, and I am sure that all of you will find that he will be always willing to co-operate and assist you in any way possible. He has indeed proved to be an outstanding complement to my Deputy Minister.

Mr. Chairman, as the years pass, while we have new members who join our family we also lose valued members of our staff and I would be remiss indeed if I did not mention two people who left us during the past year. Mrs. McConaghy, who is well-known and respected by so many municipal people and indeed others in the financial field, left our Municipal Budget and Finance Branch to join the Public Schools Finance Board. Mrs. McConaghy gave unstintingly of herself both in time and in energy during the many years that she was in our department and we wish her well in her new field, and indeed, Mr. Chairman, I'm quite happy that she's still in the employ of the province.

Also this year, Miss Isabel Fraser, better known as Jolly to many of us, who was Mr. Chappel's secretary, retired after 26 years, Mr. Chairman, of service as secretary to Deputy Ministers of this department. I'd like to make public recognition of Miss Fraser's services as a devoted public servant, one who always had a very pleasant greeting for any visitor to the department and one who was certainly very dedicated to her chosen career. It's interesting to note that Miss Fraser served some 40 years in the service of the Province of Manitoba, and I'm sure that all members of this Legislative Assembly will wish her a long and happy retirement in jolly good health.

Now, Mr. Chairman, in the time at my disposal for the consideration of the estimates of this department, I propose to review briefly some departmental activity which took place over the past year as well as to try to indicate to you some of our plans for the coming year.

Before I start, I think I would like to mention that the Urban Association of this province will be meeting in Steinbach tomorrow and that the district meetings of the Union of Municipalities will be carried out during the month of June, and for the interest of the members I thought I might list the dates and where these district meetings will be taking place because I am sure that many of you would want to attend one or more of these so that you may meet with the municipal men of this province. On June 10, the district meeting is at Dauphin; on the 11th, Rapid City; June 12, Cornwallis is the host and I expect that they will be announcing where their meeting will be quite shortly; on June 13 the district meeting will be at Carberry; June 14 at Miami; June 24 at Elm Creek; and on June 26 at Arborg.

I have tabled the Annual Report of the Municipal Board, and, Mr. Chairman, its activities are well documented therein. I would like to commend to you the Chairman of the Board, Mr. W. J. Johnston, and the members of his staff, for the continued competence and efficiency with which the functions of the Municipal Board are performed.

We have some 18 local government districts in the province under the direction of Mr. George Forsythe, and during the past year Mr. Reg. Robson has come to us as Mr. Forsythe's assistant. These two gentlemen have attempted in all our LGDs to bring about a fine spirit of liaison between the people who live there and our local government resident administrators. Because of the responsibilities of the local government districts, these responsibilities are changing with the changes in our society. For example the new unitary school divisions, with their introduction the responsibility for roads which was formerly under the jurisdiction of the school boards has now become the responsibility of the local government districts. This year, some of you who represent local government districts probably received complaints about roads, particularly in reference to snowplowing, but I feel that good liaison has helped to iron out

(MRS. FORBES cont'd.) these difficulties and I feel that in the coming year this problem will be eliminated.

As you know, at the University of Manitoba the municipal secretary-treasurers are taking a course in municipal administration and we, Mr. Chairman, have urged our resident administrators of the local government districts to take this same course. We propose to institute an orderly program designed to convert the present system of accounting in the LGDs to the same system that is used by municipalities. This program will commence this year and I'm sure you will acknowledge with me that it will take some little time before all local government districts are converted, but this is the attempt being made starting this year. At the same time, pilot projects in machine accounting will be established in some of the larger local government districts and this operation is designed ultimately to permit centralized accounting in all our local government districts.

The Local Government Districts' Branch continues to encourage the establishment of advisory committees in all our local government districts. The branch is constantly urging individuals to serve on these advisory committees so that they, along with the resident administrators, may manage the affairs of their district according to the wishes of the people who live there. Greater interest and more personal involvement in the local government district will certainly give the people a greater understanding of the problems that beset them and beset their local administrators. Mr. Jake Reimer is our capable and hard working Director of the Municipal Assessment Branch and he has, during the past year, completed new assessments in 24 rural municipalities, two towns and eight villages. In addition, the Assessment Branch has maintained and carried out the annual revision in 197 taxing jurisdictions in this province, and this function alone, Mr. Chairman, involved more than 50,000 record changes. This year it proposes to make assessments in 24 rural municipalities, one local government district, seven towns and one village.

Now we hear from various sources that all assessments should be done at one time. I believe that the honourable members in this Assembly appreciate that the branch is attempting to do as many assessments as is humanly possible in any one year. Hopefully the time is soon coming when reassessment can be done everywhere at least once every five years in an effort to keep assessment in line with changing conditions.

At this point, Mr. Chairman, I think I should take a few minutes to reply to some of the comments that have been made by the honourable members. I'm rather sorry that the Leader of the Opposition is not in his seat at this time because I would like to remark on the statement that he made, and I go back and quote from Hansard on Page 77 where he said: "Where assessment valuation previously took into consideration such factors as productivity and access to roads and markets, the basis of assessment for the past two or three years has been changed to market value, and market value based on a search of the actual sales of land made in the area." I suggest to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition that there has been no change - no change, Sir, either in the legislation governing the making of assessments or in the principles used in making assessment in this province for many years. The increases in assessed values have resulted by reason of the fact that property values in Manitoba have increased. The increases in assessment values have been made for the sole reason of keeping assessment values in a reasonable relationship with market values, and, Sir, that is precisely what the legislation passed in this House requires.

I would like to refer the members to our Municipal Act, Subsection (2) of Section 1010 and I quote from it: "Notwithstanding any other provision herein, an assessment of any land shall not be deemed to have been improperly made or to be fixed at an unreasonable, unjust or improper amount if the amount at which the land is assessed bears a fair and just relationship to the amount which other lands in the municipality are assessed." The purpose of assessment, Mr. Chairman, is that of establishing assessments or a tax basis that bear a fair and just relationship to one another. This House has long recognized that market value is the only objectively determined value. It's the one that has been weighted and determined by actual buyers and sellers in the market. It's free from arbitrary opinion and judgment, and it must be and is the standard for comparison not only as it affects agricultural land but as it affects all classes of property in the Province of Manitoba.

Now the Honourable Leader of the Opposition said, and I quote again from Hansard: "Assessment valuation previously took into consideration such factors as productivity and access to roads and market." And with this statement, Mr. Chairman, I agree, and I refer the

(MRS. FORBES cont'd.) honourable members again to Section 1010 of The Municipal Act, subsection (1), where it says and I quote: "The assessor shall consider among other things the advantages and disadvantages of location, the quality of the soil, the annual rental value which in his judgment the lands are reasonably worth for the purposes for which they may be used, the value of any standing timber and such other considerations as the Provincial Municipal Assessor directs."

Now these are factors which have been taken into consideration in making assessments previously and they are the factors that are still being taken into consideration along with all other factors affecting value in making assessment valuations today. Mr. Chairman, where the productivity of the soil is the dominant factor in determining the value of the land, productivity is also the dominant factor in determining the market value and productivity is also the dominant factor in determining your assessment value. If it's location which is the dominant factor in determining the value of your land, then location is the dominant factor in determining the market value and location is also the dominant factor in determining your assessed value.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition also stated, and I again quote from his remarks where he said: "Because some government grants for education in particular are tied to assessment, it's obvious that a doubling of assessment values means a substantial decrease in government grants for education and a corresponding increase in the costs borne at the local level. It appears that the decision to change the basis of assessment is a subtle premeditated way of reducing provincial grants." Now, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to point out to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, and to all members of this House, that there is no foundation for that statement. Assessing principles are too important to permit of manipulation as suggested by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. It's true that assessments throughout the province have increased and it's also true that the formula under which school grants are paid has changed in the last year, but the evidence in 1967 was that the portion of education costs borne by the municipalities decreased from approximately 52 million to some 49 millions of dollars. At the same time, the school grants paid out by the province increased from 49 to 61 millions of dollars in 1967. And these are the facts, Mr. Chairman. So, Mr. Chairman, having given you the actual facts, at this time I find I must question the credibility of the statements of the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

And while we are on the subject of assessments, you will recall that I agreed in this House last year to call together representatives of the various parties in the Assembly to discuss farm lands which are affected by urban influence. My Deputy Minister and I took advantage of our meeting with other ministers and deputies from across Canada this past summer to enquire if they had arrived at any solution to this very vexing problem. We heard of all their experiences but we didn't hear of any recommendations, and as a result, my Deputy Minister prepared a working paper and this working paper was presented to a group representing the various parties in this Assembly on October 16 of 1967. Those who met with us that day were given the paper to study and they were asked to prepare any comments they cared to make and to give any alternative suggestions. And so a further meeting was held on February 26 of this year and no agreement was reached and no alternatives were presented, but it was suggested that we submit this problem on assessment to the Union of Manitoba Municipalities and to the Manitoba Urban Association in order that these two organizations might consider and discuss this most important subject. Mr. Chairman, they had discussed it previously and I'm sure they will be giving it consideration again.

Since our last meeting of February, I met also with the representatives of the Metro Additional Zone Municipal Association, and with permission of the leaders of the parties here I have mailed to them, since, copies of the working paper so that they might study it and give us their opinion on it. I have not heard from them since that time. But for the benefit of the members of this House who did not participate in any of these meetings, the nub of the suggestion made in the working paper was that when the assessment values of all lands in a taxing jurisdiction have been finalized and confirmed, the owner of any of these lands might, first, elect to pay the full taxes in each year levied by the municipality; or second, he may elect the amount of assessment on which he chooses to defer his annual taxes. The working paper suggests that the amount of deferment might not be greater than 75 percent of the value of the increment which is attributed to the more favourable position of his land or location of his land. The paper also suggests that the owner, provided that he is a bona fide farmer or market

(MRS. FORBES cont'd.) gardener, would be entitled to exercise his option annually.

Now there is some reluctance on the part of all who have given this subject much thought and consideration to accept the suggestion that deferred taxes would be building up year after year for the farmer and most farmers would not really care to live with this knowledge, and indeed would not care to live with this pressure, the pressure that this debt would be accumulating against the property over the years. So since that time suggestions have been made to me that land that is classified as agricultural land and used for farming or market gardening as the chief source of income, be assessed on the same basis with their relationship to other agricultural land in that municipality. But if the farm sells for other than farm use and a gain is made which is attributed to its location, the taxes saved over a specific roll-back period of maybe say three years, or possibly five years, must be paid together with interest for that specific period.

Now this possibly, Mr. Chairman, would provide tax relief measures for people who are so located, and in a way and probably more important yet, it might and probably would permit a landowner to continue farming if he so wishes and not force him to sell his land or develop it for purposes other than agricultural. But, Mr. Chairman, this is where this very important problem now stands. It's a matter of extreme urgency, I think, that we must come to some decision on it, but I say to you, Mr. Chairman, and to all members of this committee, that there is no easy solution.

Mr. Chairman, the Municipal Services and Research Branch of our department has continued to provide assessment tax rolls to all municipalities included in the provincial municipal assessment program. In addition to this, the branch, which is most efficiently directed by Mr. George Hogan, has provided tax statements with the basic data imprinted thereon to some 197 taxing jurisdictions and it has extended the service of computation and printing of current taxes on the tax statement for some 168 taxing jurisdictions.

This branch is also undertaking a new pilot project which will enable the branch to imprint on the tax statements prepared by it arrears of taxes and taxes levied for local improvement purposes. During 1967 the Municipal Service and Research Branch converted its punch cards to magnetic tape. This conversion will permit greater flexibility in the operation of the programs of the branch and it will make the data stored in its program more readily available for other uses.

The branch is also studying the feasibility of property identification by permanent assessment or tax roll numbers. I'm happy to say that Mr. Hogan and his staff maintain excellent liaison with the officers and the secretary-treasurers of the municipalities in the province.

Our Municipal Planning Branch, Mr. Chairman, is under the direction of Mr. John Whiting, and this branch provides technical planning assistance to 51 municipalities comprised of 13 rurals, 14 villages, 22 towns and 2 cities. Because planners are in great demand, Mr. Chairman, we are continuing to experience some difficulty in maintaining our planning staff at full strength, and at present we have requests for planning assistance from five rural municipalities, four towns, six villages and one local government district, which in 1967 we were unable to give service. I am sure the honourable members are aware of this because many of you represent the areas and have spoken to me about it. Several of these locations will be receiving assistance during 1968, providing of course, Mr. Chairman, that we are able to maintain our present staff complement.

The Municipal Planning Branch publishes a Municipal Planning Newsletter four times a year. This newsletter is forwarded to all members of the planning commissions and to all secretaries of municipalities. The newsletter serves to inform planning commissions and municipalities of the planning activities being undertaken by municipalities actively engaged in planning in their communities.

Mr. Jack Richmond directs the operations of our Municipal Budget and Finance Branch. This branch of the department advises and assists the municipalities in a wide range of financial matters. I informed the Assembly last year that the branch was engaged, along with other provinces and the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, in the revision of municipal accounting classifications in the hope that standardization practices might be attained. This work has progressed favourably and it is the intention of the branch to make some amendments to the budget forms used by municipalities so that classifications used in Manitoba will conform generally to those recommended throughout the Dominion of Canada.

Mr. Chairman, as a matter of interest to you and to the honourable members, during

(MRS. FORBES cont'd.) 1967 we received in the Budget and Finance Branch 100 percent - 100 percent of the municipal budgets, and hopefully, Sir, that this record will be matched in 1968. You will all have received a copy of the Municipal Information on Municipalities for the municipal fiscal year of 1966, and I am sure that the honourable members will have noted a significant change in the manner in which our statistical information is presented this time. A great deal more information is provided and the general accounts are classified to show expenditures by municipalities for various functions, such as their public works, protection of persons and property, sanitation and waste removal, health, welfare, recreation and community services.

You will have observed also that a much more comprehensive analysis of investment and capital debt has been provided. A lesser percentage of the taxes imposed in 1967 was collected than was the case for 1966, Mr. Chairman. In 1966, 101.25 percent of the tax imposition in that year was collected, but in 1967 only 97.87 percent of the taxes imposed was collected by December 31st. In 1966, only towns had a tax collection of less than 100 percent of the levies imposed and this pattern seems to have followed through in 1967, when towns again had the lowest percentage of collection in relation to the total tax imposition. In 1966 the towns collected 98.66 percent of the taxes imposed and in 1967 they collected 93.3 percent. Only in the suburban municipalities where tax collections amounted to 103.81 of the taxes imposed did the tax collection exceed the amount of taxes imposed.

Mr. Chairman, the Local Government Boundaries Commission, under the efficient and capable chairmanship of Mr. R.G. Smellie, has undertaken a comprehensive research program preparatory to making their recommendations concerning the territory to be included in and the boundaries of local government units. During 1967, in addition to carrying out its very extensive research program, the Boundaries Commission has principally devoted its time to the first priority which was established for it by this House, that of recommending the territory to be included in in the boundaries of proposed school areas, school divisions, school districts and vocational school regions. The commission has enquired into and reported on these features to the Honourable Minister of Education.

The commission has prepared provisional plans and made a provisional report, which is labelled Volume 1, recommending the territories to be included in in the boundaries of the school divisions in the Interlake area of this province. It, as you know, scheduled some seven public meetings which it commenced about April - I think it was April 8th - and later on I believe they had two requests for additional meetings which they were able to hold. They heard any person who desired to make any representation to it with respect to the territories to be included in in the boundaries of the school divisions, and indeed from the press reports, Mr. Chairman, it created much interest in this question as to the type of education and of course as to where these educational facilities should be offered in that area, and the Boundaries Commission at present is busy preparing a report on their findings.

Mr. Chairman, during 1967 we received in the Department of Municipal Affairs requests from one city and three towns for alterations in their boundaries - the City of Brandon and the towns of Gimli, Russell and Souris. To ensure that the additions requested were necessary and desirable, these requests were forwarded to the commission for investigation and recommendation and the commission concurred with the proposals submitted by two of the towns, namely, Souris and Russell, but it recommended against the inclusion of additional lands within the boundaries of the City of Brandon and it recommended the addition of a smaller area of land than was requested in the case of the other town, that being the Town of Gimli.

Now the commission is reaching the completion of its basic research and it has gathered the essential data necessary to enable it to prepare provisional plans and make provisional reports recommending the territories to be included in in the boundaries of the school divisions located south of Township 53.

Having this work well under way, Mr. Chairman, I have requested the commission to turn to its second priority, that priority being the metropolitan area of Greater Winnipeg, and hopefully about mid-summer the commission, the Boundaries Commission will be able to commence its studies of the metropolitan area of Greater Winnipeg. Mr. Chairman, data will be assembled which will enable the commission to prepare a plan and make a report recommending the territory to be included in in the boundaries of school divisions and municipalities in the metropolitan area.

There has been no change in the make-up of the Boundaries Commission apart from the

(MRS. FORBES cont'd.) fact that Mr. Posmituck, who was a member of the commission, tendered his resignation for personal reasons. The present membership of the commission is as follows: R.G.Smellie, Chairman; Rene Lafreniere, Vice Chairman; C.M.Kushner, Special Counsel; and in addition the members are: Z. Audet, John Belows, R.H.G.Bonnycastle, Ernest Enns, H.M.Keay, Dr. W.C.Lockhart, Murdoch McIver, C.J.Riediger, Harry Shearer, Peter Thiessen, and S. Wopford.

Mr. Chairman, you will recall that the Local Government Boundaries Commission Act provides that the commission shall consist of not less than seven persons when the commission was initially instituted. Its membership at that time, apart from the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, was weighted in a ratio of some two to one persons having rural orientation, because the first priority of the commission, Sir, was that of preparing the plans and recommending the boundaries for proposed school areas. With a view to expediting the work of the commission in completing its second priority, that of preparing a plan and reporting upon the boundaries of the proposed local government units in the metropolitan area, we have asked the Cabinet for and received approval to expand the commission membership by some five members. It would seem logical that for this phase of the commission's work its membership might be weighted more heavily with urban-oriented people.

Similarly, it is our thought that when the commission proceeds to its third priority, its membership might again be weighted to rural-oriented people. We have therefore asked certain organizations, the Mayors and Reeves Association, the Additional Zone Municipal Association and the Board of Trustees of School Divisions in the metropolitan area and the additional zones to provide us with a list of names of persons who would be willing to serve, and who have urban orientation, as members of the Boundaries Commission. From these lists we propose to appoint some five additional urban-oriented people to this commission for the second phase of its work in the metropolitan area. These latterly appointed members can be discharged if it's deemed desirable at the completion of this phase, and at that time the rural members on that commission may be reactivated for the third phase. In this manner, Mr. Chairman, the Boundaries Commission will be enabled to continue and to complete all phases of its work most expeditiously.

Mr. Chairman, I have one more department to report upon before I take my chair and that is our Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation. As you know, last year during the last session this House passed an Act which was proclaimed on June 21st bringing this Housing and Renewal Corporation into being. Mr. Neil Osler is the Chairman of the Corporation and Mr. Robert Clarkson is the Comptroller. To operate the Housing and Renewal Corporation, the staff of the former Housing and Renewal Branch were appointed as the staff of the new corporation. Assisting the Chairman is a Board of Directors composed of representatives from the Departments of the Attorney-General, from Health, from Labour and from Welfare. Mr. Chairman, this corporation assumed the aspects and the liabilities acquired and incurred under the former Public Housing and Urban Renewal Act and the corporation also assumes the responsibilities for the administration of all programs in progress at that time.

The Burrows-Keewatin Housing Project is the first housing built in Manitoba as a joint three-way partnership with the municipality being Winnipeg, the province, and the federal people participating. There are some 165 units there which have become home to some 890 persons. The honourable members know that in addition to the Burrows-Keewatin there are 328 housing units presently being constructed in a redevelopment area of the City of Winnipeg known as Lord Selkirk Park. Now this is the second joint venture. Many of the units have been completed and families are moving into the accommodations as they become available.

These, Mr. Chairman, are the first two ventures in the field of public housing, and I think at this time I would like to stop and pay tribute to the City of Winnipeg. They are to be congratulated on their initiative, and the redevelopment which has taken place in this area is certainly credited to their energy and it has brought a brighter picture to many families living there.

As well, Mr. Chairman, I must point out to some of the honourable critics of this program that it is a continuing proposition, and as I have said, the implementation of the Lord Selkirk plan will take -- on previous occasions I have stated to you that it will take some five years so that money set aside every year goes into the continuation of this project, which takes in subsidization and maintenance, which must be estimated and looked after yearly.

Rents in the housing projects are based on a rent-to-income schedule and not on the size

(MRS. FORBES cont'd.) of the accommodation. The accommodations available vary from a bachelor apartment to five bedroom houses, and yet families are required to pay a rent based on the total family income. While the lowest rent for fully serviced accommodation could be \$32.00 for a family earning less than \$194.00 a month, rents increase until a person earning some \$560.00 per month would have to pay about 30 percent of his income or \$168.00. The average rent in this public housing complex is, Sir, about \$55.00 per month.

The Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation assumed the responsibility for the provincial share of financing the implementation of an urban renewal scheme in Lord Selkirk Park and this scheme has since been enlarged. The total cost of acquisition and clearance is now estimated at \$8,750,000, and as I said, it's expected to take some five years to implement. The recoveries are estimated to be at something like \$2,349,000 and so it leaves an estimated net total cost of about \$6,400,000. This cost is shared by Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, the City of Winnipeg, and the province represented by the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation. They pick up our 25 percent. The new housing provided for those who formerly lived there has been improved, and as I said, a severely blighted area in one of our oldest districts of Winnipeg has given new hope and new opportunity to many people who are living there.

In Manitoba, and indeed across the Dominion, Mr. Chairman, we have been following a pattern, and I suppose this is really developed because we are attempting to make use of all avenues under the National Housing Act. The pattern has been that we designate an area as an urban renewal area; we have a study made; examine the study, and if need is evident, we take the next step required and that is the preparation of the scheme. When the preparation of the scheme gives us the cost factors involved, this leads us to the third step which is implementation.

But, Mr. Chairman, I think the time has come when we must face the cold hard facts, because there are those who applaud public housing and there are those who approve it and there are some who disapprove of it, who want neither urban renewals nor do they want public housing. We are told that placing people in a section of the city and labelling that section as public housing is refusing them the privileges of their choice; their choice of district, their choice of a home in which they would care to live, and actually we are forcing welfare on them rather than letting their pocketbooks dictate the terms, because after all we do pay the difference between what they are able to pay and the actual rental of the accommodation.

Perhaps, Mr. Chairman, it's time we took a long look at the pattern that we have been following. Let's not forget that this pattern was to some extent dictated, because this was the way in which we could take advantage of the National Housing Act. But I cannot help but ask myself, Mr. Chairman, if we are doing all the planning . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: I wonder if the Minister would just come to order for a moment. She has spoken slightly past the 40 minutes, so if you would complete your remarks as quickly as possible, please. You may proceed Honourable Minister, but I would ask you to complete your remarks as quickly as possible.

MRS. FORBES: Mr. Chairman, I was hoping by presenting this that I would give the information rather than to have questions come to me, but I'm quite willing to leave at this point and let the honourable members take their turn and ask me questions. -- (Interjection) -- As long as I'm doing the hard working, it won't be quite so bad.

As I said, Mr. Chairman, I think that it is time that we took a hard look at this. Our intent is good, but really are we causing the individual to lose his privilege of choice? Would it be possible probably to interview these people and let them decide in what part of the city they might like to live, where they would feel at home possibly, where they would be near their work or whatever their taste may be, and with counselling they could decide according to their own pocketbooks the kind of accommodation that they would like to seek for their families. Using our present scale of assistance, we could still help in their rental arrangements and in this way we would not have set them apart in a place labelled "public housing", but rather, Sir, we would have integrated them into our society, living as closely within their means as possible, living in an area of their choice and having a degree of choice in their own home.

I recognize at the same time of course that the single family unit is costly and that we must think of higher density accommodation, but, Mr. Chairman, having lived in an apartment block, I can tell you that this takes some adjustment and I think that this transitional period for a number of people to keep them living happily in a high density area is one which will require

(MRS. FORBES cont'd.) a great amount of counselling and help. And in turn, when I think about the Indian and the Metis and our attempts to help them and try to get them to live in high density areas from the type of living which they have been accustomed to, will certainly also take much counselling and consideration.

Housing, the need for it and the fulfillment of that need, I would like to say, is really my first priority. But the problems are many and the solutions, we simply have to keep on trying, but we must be ever cognizant of what our financial means are. As I have said, Mr. Chairman, much of the activity in public housing and urban renewal has been confined to the City of Winnipeg, but this is partly due to the fact that Winnipeg is an older city and it has the staff and it certainly has acted on these matters and we commend them for it.

But urban renewal schemes have been prepared for other than the City of Winnipeg. At present an urban renewal scheme has been prepared for the Local Government District of Gillam, and approval has been given for one in the City of St. James to prepare an urban renewal scheme for that portion which is known as Brooklands. There has also been approval for a scheme in the Town of Altona.

A special study, as you know, was carried out called the Churchill Development Plan, the plan I tabled in the House on April 19th, where this study recommends intensive redevelopment on the existing site with a need to investigate the economic and social needs of the people so as to develop types of housing suitable for that area. With the development of housing types, a development plan can be prepared which will serve as a guide for future development of Churchill.

Mr. Chairman, a special housing study has also been done by the Manitoba Housing Renewal Corporation in the Interlake area of Manitoba.

Another program in which the corporation does not actively participate but is a signator to the agreement between the municipality and Central Mortgage and Housing is in the field of land assembly, and as members of the House will know, land assembly programs are presently taking place in the City of Brandon, in Fort Garry and in Boissevain.

This year the City of Winnipeg has already requested for an investigation into the need of some 70 more units of housing and we expect that Altona, Brandon, Selkirk and The Pas will proceed with their plans, and no doubt there will be other municipalities throughout the province who will be asking for some assistance. I'm confident, Mr. Chairman, that our housing corporation will do their very best to assist in any way they possibly can to provide needed housing, needed and necessary housing, for the people of Manitoba. The Honourable Member from Rhineland had asked me if we had an annual report from the Housing Corporation. I enquired about this. The annual report was not prepared until the -- at the end of March 31st. It is in at this time being audited and it will be before us as soon as available.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Turtle Mountain.

MR. DOW: Mr. Chairman, my first words in regards to the estimates of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Urban Renewal would be to concur with her in her appreciation of the civil servants. Having just completed 22 years of active participation in municipal affairs as at the end of December last year, I would like to at this time express my appreciation for the very fine co-operation I did have in the past, and the present members of the Municipal Affairs Department and Municipal Boards throughout those years. They certainly have served a wonderful purpose regarding advising and keeping people on the right track as far as municipal administration.

When we consider that municipalities throughout Manitoba can be compared to the child of a provincial government, inasmuch as they are creatures of this provincial government, and when you consider the various moves that have been made throughout the last number of years, you sometimes wonder if the child is the wayward child or whether it's a good child.

I would like, for a moment, just to bring again to the attention of the Assembly that the municipalities over the years, and particularly in 1963 established the Commission of Recommendations for the operations of municipalities, and in particular the one clause that the Fisher Commission recommended, I'd like to quote from it, Mr. Chairman, wherein he says, "That it is not wise for those who are interested in the survival of local government and increased local autonomy, an efficient administration in the province, to consider and recommend changes rather than have unwelcome changes thrust upon them by senior governments." This is a very broad statement and I'm sure it would lead to some of the various current arguments that are

(MR. DOW cont'd.) in effect today. He quotes again "That if autonomous, democratic self-government fails at the grass roots level, it will not be long until we experience increasing bureaucracy at all levels of government. The Commission hopes that the changes it proposes will tend to strengthen and increase the autonomy and the future efficiency of development of local government in the Province of Manitoba."

It's somewhat unfortunate, and I think rightly so, that we in the House cannot refer to certain arguments and statements made by civil servants who can't protect themselves in the House. So any arguments I have, Mr. Chairman - I don't wish to imply that the Minister has made these statements - but I do have some statements that I wish to propose, that I disagree with her statements, that were not made by her but came out of the department.

One of the main concerns is assessment. I think the general administrators of municipal affairs have this concern. We do have two types of assessment in Manitoba; we have one for the urban areas and one from the rural. They both are trying to achieve, and I think in most cases do achieve, the equity that the Act sets out that they should do, but, Mr. Chairman, I think that in the current revamping of the assessment we have had a change in agricultural assessments. The inflated value of land sales have given the tendency to increase assessments in rural areas, and if I might just for a moment come back to a meeting that was held in Souris about a year and a half or two years ago of which statements were made there as to how the assessment was arrived at in regards to agricultural land, it might serve some purpose in this debate.

The statement, as I have it taken down from this meeting, was that in 1950 the total assessment for the province was divided 45 percent rural and 55 percent urban. In 1966 it now becomes 25 percent rural and 75 percent urban. In 1950, farm lands assessed at, and related to the productivity of the value in the years from 1925 to 1950, which in today's market represent 25 percent of the real value. Most urban areas were assessed by the provincial assessors in the early 1950s, reassessed on occasion since that date, which has resulted in the assessment figures being up-to-date and representing 40 to 50 percent of the actual cash value, or real value, and because of the discrepancy in the relationship of assessment to real value in rural and urban properties, the urban people felt that they were carrying an unfair burden of school costs.

As a result of this, it was the intention of the Municipal Branch to bring rural municipal properties more in line with urban properties. The relationship of the assessed value to real value will be brought up to the same level as urban property, and whereas presently the assessed value of farm lands represents about 25 percent of the real value, following the re-assessment it will represent 40 to 50 percent of the real value, and the school taxes will be based on the revised assessment. Then he goes on to say that the reassessment will be done not in the field, but by applying factors to the existing figures.

Mr. Chairman, I think in my opinion this becomes a very unfair method of setting an assessed value on farm lands. I do know from experience that the sample sales that have been made in various municipalities that have been brought into the municipal offices from the Land Titles Office showing change of ownership, do show the actual cash value. These have been picked up and been used as the total sale value of the total municipality involved. I do think there is quite an unfair adjustment in assessments in this regard. I appreciate the remarks of the Minister in regards to the way the assessment has been arrived at, but here I must disagree that in actual practice this has not shown up exactly that same way. In effect, the normal procedure is the value of land as sold discounted by 60 percent, and this generally becomes the assessed value.

There have been many disturbed people throughout the province in regards to this maze of taxation, more particularly I think when you get back into this argument that has been brought up many times, that somewhere along the line the Province of Manitoba should define the actual responsibilities and the powers of taxing to meet the current needs that have appeared now and are maybe not adequate for current operations. I feel that I cannot stress this too much, that somewhere a definition of responsibilities of the municipal administrators throughout the province should be more closely spelled out so that they have a direct contact with the people in regards to their taxes.

One of the disturbing factors this year, and I believe that, as the Honourable Minister mentioned, at the Urban and Union Meetings this will certainly be a topic of discussion, is the increase of the mill rate for school purposes. Along with the increased assessment and the

(MR. DOW cont'd.) increased taxes fixed by the school divisions, there is little relief to the taxpayer. I think all over the province this has been a known fact that we now come into a picture where it starts to really be a problem that hurts the taxpayer, particularly the person that is not in a position of escalating salary.

One of the interesting figures that came out of the Honourable Minister's report of 1966 which I think will bring this to light, in the towns, cities and villages, I think it's quite explainable why there are more taxes. There is more buildings, more industry and so on; there is a bigger tax base. But the taxes imposed in 1961 in rural municipalities were 13 million-odd dollars; in 1966 they show in their report 18 million some-odd dollars, an increase of 5 million dollars on the agricultural land. Again you might take other figures, and here again it is very hard to define and set out the comparable examples for the suburban areas, villages and towns, because you have the building growth that adds to it.

But I would like to refer to the equalized assessment in rural municipalities. In 1961 the equalized assessment in rural municipalities were \$301,988,000.00. In 1966 the increase was to \$314,822,000, but the equalized assessment for 1968 now becomes four million, 596 thousand -- I don't think I've got enough zeros there -- \$459,601,000, so there is an increase from 1961 to 1968 of \$150-some million which is roughly 150 over what it was in 1961 at 300. So you can see the concern in regards to assessment when you start this increase. I am concerned that the agitation and arguments -- and we say that the more arguments you have the more healthy the people are, but I sometimes wonder how far we can go with the continual cost increase in regards to taxes. This becomes right down to the local level and I know we don't like to be paying taxes.

So I again appeal to the Minister somewhere along the line to go back to the same argument, a definite responsible definition of responsibilities in regards to administration of municipal affairs and a taxing base that they can use and set it up for a period of years, not have it current and changing from year to year. The municipalities in Manitoba generally at the present time, tax-wise, as the Minister mentioned, have an excellent record in regards to payment of taxes, and I think that as long as they can continue to do this it's good, but I'm concerned about the fact that there is definitely a tendency to hold back on the tax picture to a late date in the year and it puts the municipalities in some cases in an embarrassing position.

One or two features -- and I believe that possibly I could mention this, that may be taken care of in one of the bills -- but I know that municipalities have found difficulties in their debenture issues in regards to the fact that no provision was made for increased advancing interest rates. I believe that there will be some changes made in this and I hope there is.

If I was to quarrel with the Minister in regards to some of her renewal, I would like to go back to a local area in regards to the low cost land assembly which she mentioned in the Town of Boissevain, and the quarrel I would have there is that the province is not assisting financially. I think this is her prerogative, but under the Act the Federal Government put up 75 percent and the municipality 25. I would recommend this scheme to other communities that wish to develop their land because it is an opportunity to expand the boundaries in small communities and get a subdivision. It's under control of the province, but I guess money is tight and they don't like to put their money in that portion of it. But this is one suggestion I could make, that they might assist municipalities by taking a portion and share of this 25 percent.

I have one suggestion to make in regards to the planning division in the Province of Manitoba. I think the Minister mentioned it -- I agree with her -- difficulty in getting personnel to carry it out. But I do wish that somewhere along the line they could come a little more active, become a little faster in their results of setting up certain schemes. I refer to one in particular that has been on the drawing board three years. Now this seems to be a little too long to get a small little plan passed through the Board to get it into operation, and I would suggest that somewhere along the line that if the planning people can't do it, the municipalities be given the power to go ahead and get it done because it's too long a time to wait for this period of time, for three years.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. I wonder if we could have just a little more quiet in the Committee. I think the Minister is having difficulty in hearing the honourable member speaking up here. He may proceed.

HON. STERLING R. LYON, Q. C. (Attorney-General) (Fort Garry):
 . . . and call the Speaker back in. If it would meet their approval if we adjourn in Committee and come back -- we'll be coming into the House tonight to deal with second readings of bills.

(MR. LYON cont'd.) If that procedure has no objection, I would suggest we do that.

MR. PAULLEY: There is one point I would like to refer to my honourable friend. We have just passed a resolution that each sitting will be a separate sitting, and of course one of the features in this connection it gives members an opportunity to answer - or ask rather, the answers of course would normally come from the opposite side of the House - but questions on Orders of the Day. Now having said that, and of course it would be by leave, Mr. Chairman, I haven't had an opportunity of really considering this, but I'm wondering whether or not it might be acceptable for today to do what the Honourable the Attorney-General, the House Leader, has suggested for today. But let us reserve however - and I'm saying this because I'm not in possession of any matters that my caucus may desire to raise on Orders for the Return and questions - so I think, Mr. Chairman, that I would reflect the opinion of my group at the present time by saying that as of now we have no objections but let us not consider this a precedent for the balance of the sitting of the Session.

MR. LYON: Mr. Chairman, for that matter if we want to have - it saves another Order Paper being made up which is the important thing - and for that matter if honourable members want to go through the regular procedure tonight that can easily be done.

MR. PAULLEY: as long as it's not construed as a precedent. And now maybe we can have dinner.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Turtle Mountain then may proceed after lunch. It is 12:30. I leave the Chair until 2:30.