

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
10:00 o'clock, Friday, May 26, 1972

Opening Prayer by Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: Before we proceed I should like to direct the attention of the honourable members to the gallery where we have 60 students of Grade 11 standing of the Miles MacDonnell School Collegiate. These students are under the direction of Mr. McBurney and Mrs. Lowden. This school is located in my own constituency of Kildonan.

We also have 35 students of Grade 6 standing of the Madison School from Fargo N.D. These students are under the direction of Mr. Melarvie. On behalf of all the honourable members of the Legislative Assembly I welcome you here today.

Presenting Petitions; Reading and Receiving Petitions; Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees; Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports. The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

HON. RUSSELL PAULLEY (Minister of Labour) (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, I have a statement to make.

Mr. Speaker, the report of the Minimum Wage Board was tabled Tuesday last. At that time I indicated the recommendations contained in the report were under active consideration by the government. The majority report recommended a 10 cent increase in the minimum wage as of January 1st, 1973; the minority report of the employee representatives suggested a figure of \$1.92 per hour effective July 1st this year. After due consideration the government has decided to increase the present minimum wage of \$1.65 per hour to \$1.75 effective the 1st of October of this year.

Other recommendations made by members of the Minimum Wage Board have been subjected to full consideration and it is agreed that a detailed analysis will be made into the effects of the minimum wage in Manitoba to industry and recipients of the basic wage. It was also agreed that the Department of Labour will be requested to compile quarterly statements as to enforcement and application of the minimum wage indicating any violations of the Act and also assess as closely as possible the number of employees in receipt of the minimum wage.

It is further ordered that the inspectors of the department will under no circumstances reveal the source of information which may lead to investigations and possible prosecution respecting violations of the Act.

A further suggestion contained in the report was that consideration should be given to the application of the minimum wage to the agricultural industry. This matter will be given every consideration in consultation with representatives of the agricultural industry. Other recommendations were made dealing with the minimum wage regulations and these will be given every consideration by the government.

And if I may, Mr. Speaker, I omitted to indicate in this statement that the same differential presently applying to those under 18 and learners will apply. In the case of those under 18 a differential of 25 cents per hour and in respect of learners, 15 cents less per hour for the first three month period and five cents per hour for the second three month period.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Emerson.

MR. GABRIEL GIRARD (Emerson): Mr. Speaker, it is with caution that we receive the statement of the Honourable Minister. We would suggest that the increase of the minimum wage of 10 cents although seems somewhat reasonable, we cannot but suggest that we are concerned about the effects of the increasing minimum wage on employment opportunity during a time when unemployment is a very serious matter not only in our province but throughout the whole of Canada.

We are very happy to hear that the Minister will undertake to study the effect of the minimum wage. We find it somewhat regrettable, and I think we mentioned this during his Estimates, that we find the Minister often without a great deal of analysis and research and I'm happy to see that the Minister has taken some heed in that respect in that the matter of the effect of minimum wage will definitely be considered.

With regard to the application of the minimum wage to the agricultural sector, I suggest

(MR. GIRARD cont'd) that this is really not going to be a very effective kind of matter because right now the rural community, and it's the farming community especially, find it almost difficult if not impossible to find the proper kind of assistance regardless of what the minimum wage is and consequently I can see no drastic effect in that particular area.

Just one other matter that concerns us, Mr. Speaker, and that is we find that in Manitoba at large it is almost essential that this particular government increase the minimum wage, not because the minimum wage is too low but because the welfare that's being paid now is somewhat higher than the minimum wage in many respects. It's a ridiculous situation when you find that people tell you that if they were unemployed and if they were on welfare, they would be getting more money in fact than they are getting now working at even more than minimum wage. So I can see this government having placed itself in a position where it really has no alternative but to increase the minimum wage, advisedly or not, and I'm only suggesting that the 10 cents doesn't seem radical to us.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: Before we proceed I should like to direct the attention of the honourable members to the gallery where we have 80 Grade 8 students of the West Park Junior High from Altona. These students are under the direction of Mr. Klassen. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Rhineland.

On behalf of the honourable members I welcome you here.
The Honourable Minister of Health and Social Development.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

HON. RENE E. TOUPIN (Minister of Health and Social Development) (Springfield): Mr. Speaker, I have a statement to make. Copies are now being made available, pertaining to abortions performed in the Province of Manitoba.

The 827 therapeutic abortions performed on Manitoba residents in Manitoba hospitals in 1971 were produced strictly in accordance with provisions under the Criminal Code of Canada and were covered by the Manitoba Health Services Insurance Plan. Abortions performed in Manitoba come under the provisions of the Federal law, the terms of which are set out clearly in sections 251 and 252 of the Criminal Code. The Manitoba Government neither condones nor condemns the practice of therapeutic abortions but abides by the law which states that therapeutic abortions may be procured and carried out by a qualified medical practitioner in an accredited or approved hospital following the majority approval of the Abortion Committee for the hospital in question.

Any Provincial Minister of Health may under the law, require a therapeutic abortion committee of the hospital or general practitioner concerned with an abortion, to furnish him with a certificate and information relating to circumstances surrounding the issuance of the certificate or the procurement of the abortion.

According to the figures released this month by Statistics Canada in terms of rates per 100 live births, 30,923 therapeutic abortions reported for all Canadian residents in 1971 amounted to 8.3 percent of live births. Therapeutic abortion rates for this time, for the same period for the provinces vary from about 19 percent of live births for British Columbia to about 10 and 12 percent of live births for Alberta and Ontario, to about 4.5 percent of live births for Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Nova Scotia and 2 percent or less of live births for the provinces of Quebec, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland.

Actual numbers of therapeutic abortions in 1971 by provinces were Newfoundland 78; Prince Edward Island 39; Nova Scotia 643; New Brunswick 146; Quebec 1,881; Ontario 16,173; Manitoba 827; Saskatchewan 756; Alberta 3,116; British Columbia 7,045, Yukon Territory 8. These were the numbers of abortions performed on provincial residents. A small additional number in most provinces represented abortions procured by women from other provinces and other countries. It is apparent, Mr. Speaker, that Manitoba with 4.5 abortions per 100 live births has one of the lowest rates in Canada; and it is considerably below the all Canada average of 8.3 per 100 live births.

A further comparison of the recent Statistics Canada figures indicates that therapeutic abortions in all ten provinces of Canada last year were consistently lower than those reported in 16 states in the United States as reported by the U.S. Department of Health Education and Welfare for the first quarter of 1971. Georgia, as an example, reported the lowest rate, 1.3

(MR. TOUPIN cont'd) per 100 live births, which is the same as New Brunswick but higher than Newfoundland's 0.6. The state of New York registers 78.1 therapeutic abortions per 100 live births but the City of New York itself reported a rate of 131.3 and Upstate New York 30.7. Oregon showed 20.7; Hawaii 23.6; California 25.7 and Kansas 31.2; all considerably higher than Canada's highest province, British Columbia where the rate was 19.1.

Comparative figures in other parts of the world according to the latest available figures indicate that in 1970 in England and Wales the combined number of therapeutic abortions per 100 live births was 11, Czechoslovakia in 1969 it was 46; in Hungary that same year it was 134 per 100 live births. I was told that Poland has one of the highest figures in the world. I didn't get the figure.

Persons who seek advice at Mount Carmel Clinic regarding abortions must submit to the same rules applied to any other patient anywhere in Manitoba and in Canada in the same circumstances. Counselling regarding abortion is a very small part of the services at the Clinic where both Health and Social Services are part of integrated programs. About one percent of the more than 35,000 visits in 1971 at the Mount Carmel Clinic involved abortion counselling, one percent. But it is extremely difficult to isolate this kind of thing in relation to counselling at the Clinic where the emphasis is on the whole person. Of the services dispensed by the clinic in 1971, the greater proportion lay in the area of general services. For example, birth control information, prenatal care, care for the children, general medical services and dental services.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. WARNER H. JORGENSEN (Morris): Mr. Speaker, I should like to rise on a point of order. The period of time allocated for the issuance of statements by members of the government is intended for the government to provide the House with information relating to government policies. There was nothing contained in the statement made by the Minister that had anything to do with government policy, it was simply a repetition of information contained in a bulletin issued by Statistics Canada. I presume that the time of the House was taken up in a reply to the question asked by the Member for Thompson which could have been provided as a written answer to a question or for an Order for Return, or in Caucus.

I think, Sir, that this is an abuse of the time of the House to provide that kind of information which contains nothing in the way of government policy and I hope that Cabinet will take that into consideration. We welcome statements of government policy and we encourage the government to make those statements in the Chamber but this did not fall into that category by any stretch of the imagination.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister, on the same point.

HON. EDWARD SCHREYER (Premier) (Rossmere): Mr. Speaker, it's a moot point whether or not the statement that has just been given by the Minister of Health has anything to do with government policy. The Member for Morris contests that it has nothing to do with government policy and I submit, speaking to the point of order that it certainly does relate to government policy, in the following way, Mr. Speaker:

It has been often suggested by certain members and by certain people among the general public that the policy of the Department of Health and Welfare within the Province of Manitoba is somehow at great variance with public policy in our sister provinces in Canada and the whole point of the statement on motions made by the Honourable Minister of Health and Welfare is to provide statistical data and facts to demonstrate, for the information of honourable members, that the actual facts show that in Manitoba practice and policy is such as to keep Manitoba well within the, shall we say, the average normal of practices that are carried forward in Canada in the several provinces under the current provisions of the law as it exists at the moment in this respect. So certainly it does relate to current policy and was intended to clarify that current policy in this province is certainly well at or about the average of practice in our country.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SIDNEY SPIVAK, Q.C. (Leader of the Opposition) (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, on the point of order. Surely the First Minister will not deny that the Minister of Health and Social Development had the opportunity to explain and answer the criticisms that have been made of his department and to defend his position during his Estimates. Surely that was the appropriate time. This is not a statement of policy, this is a defence to a criticism that has been levelled and surely the right time and the proper time would have been on his Estimates when they were

(MR. SPIVAK cont'd) presented before the Legislature rather than using this occasion. I think, and I reiterate again on the point of order, not sour grapes, but on the point of order, the comments of our House Leader that in respect of government policy we welcome it and this is what this particular item on the proceedings was supposed to be used for.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge. The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. TOUPIN: Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order. The Premier indicated quite justifiably that I did rise on a question of policy of government, and secondly the Honourable Leader of the Official Opposition is quite aware that leave was asked during my Estimates to allow me further time to answer other questions that were posed in the House and leave was denied by your party.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Order, please. -- (Interjection) -- The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. JORGENSON: I must rise, Sir, on a question of privilege to the statement now made by the Minister of Health and Social Development. He knows full well that two hours of the time of Estimates were taken up by members on his side of the House protecting him and you should have that protection. If you could have kept his members silent there would have been an opportunity for him to make those replies.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Order, please. I should like to indicate that the point of order that was raised by the Honourable Member for Morris in my opinion I think there's validity to both sides of the argument and that we can probably better adjudicate and come to some consensus by the House Leaders getting together on this matter with myself.

If the point of order is well taken then I would assume that the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge does not wish to address herself to what was not policy, or does she?

The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MRS. INEZ TRUEMAN (Fort Rouge): Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The Honourable First Minister on another point of order.

MR. SCHREYER: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I believe that a point of order has precedence over a point of privilege. The Member for Morris presumed to rise on a point of privilege and as he was allowed to state it it was that some private members on this side had been allowed to question and speak during the consideration of the Estimates of the Minister of Health and Welfare. And I suggest to you, Sir, as a point of order, that it is completely a spurious point of privilege to suggest that the privilege of the House is somehow being broken or abused when a private member on this side is allowed to speak during consideration of Estimates.

All the years of parliament, Sir, should demonstrate pretty clearly that the rights of members are equal on both sides or all sides of the House. It is completely incredible to suggest it is an abuse of the procedures of this House for a member - particularly a veteran member who should know better - to suggest for a split second that it is somehow in order for a member on that side to speak during Estimates and it is an abuse of the privilege of the House for a member on this side to speak during Estimates. Completely ridiculous!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Order. I should like to indicate to the Honourable Member for Morris he's well aware that whatever his statements are, they're not recorded because he was not recognized and he will not be recognized neither will any other member until I give the signal. Let's have some procedure, we're not going to start shouting at each other across the hall. I'm sure you don't appreciate it, I don't appreciate it and people that have to transcribe certainly can't get any sense out of what is on tape at that time. Now let's all work together and get things under control. If it's too warm in here we can turn on the refrigeration. It may make a little noise but I'm sure we'd sooner put-up with the noise than with the discomfort of the heat.

The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MRS. TRUEMAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a statement on what the Minister has presented to the House although I must say that I'm in the position of having a tough act to follow.

I feel this would have been an ideal opportunity for the Minister to express a new policy concerning intensified education within his department's purview in regard to family life education and family planning. I think the statistics that have been presented reflect completely

(MRS. TRUEMAN cont'd) the inadequacy of our present educational system regarding human reproductive functions and the preventive measures that people should be aware of. I've always thought it was a strange thing that matters such as this should be left in the hands of legislators. Certainly they would be the last people in the world to know the rather desperate circumstances that sometimes face women and undoubtedly the penalties do fall on the women. In our more permissive society I think that there is a greater responsibility on us to ensure that young people are properly educated and also that we should be leaders in changing the public attitude so that there would be less censure of the unmarried woman who wishes to keep her child.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would simply like to say that I'm sorry that the Minister didn't use this opportunity to announce a greatly expanded family planning program.

MR. SPEAKER: Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports; Notices of Motion; Introduction of Bills. The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

HON. SAMUEL USKIW (Minister of Agriculture) (Lac du Bonnet) introduced, for the Honourable Minister of Tourism, Recreation and Cultural Affairs, Bill No. 70, an Act to amend The Amusements Act (2); and Bill No. 69, an Act to amend The Tourism and Recreation Act. (Recommended by the Honourable the Administrator of the Government of the Province of Manitoba)

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. A. H. MACKLING, Q.C. (Attorney-General) (St. James) introduced Bill No. 48, an Act to amend The Hearing Aid Act and Bill No. 71, an Act to amend The Consumer Protection Act.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral Questions. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the First Minister. I wonder whether he can indicate whether the computer purchased from Symbionics is now operating?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Industry and Commerce could give perhaps a more updated reply. My information is that certainly arrangements are well under way with respect to staffing and other arrangements necessary preliminary to the computer facility going operational. Certain accounts have already been brought in hand and so certainly at the present time the signs appear quite positive and should be going operational very shortly.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: I wonder if the First Minister could indicate whether the computer hardware is in use at the present time?

MR. SCHREYER: My impression, Mr. Speaker, is that everything is being put into a condition where it can go operational very soon. Now it may be that the hardware itself is being used already on certain various specific uses, however I'll have to check.

MR. SPIVAK: I wonder if the First Minister could indicate what particular use it will be used for -- and I assume he would have to take that as notice.

MR. SCHREYER: There are to my knowledge at least nine or ten different programmatic uses but I will have to check that as well. Scientific analysis, statistical analysis, utilization is one broad category. I do believe guaranteed annual income computer requirement is also involved. But as I say in total at least nine or ten plus some very prospect of a number of private sector accounts.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

MR. GORDON E. JOHNSTON (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Speaker, I direct my question to the Honourable Minister of Health and Social Services. Is the statement that he just read to the House concerning abortions -- is this analysis of figures a product of the Manitoba Bureau of Statistics?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health and Social Development.

MR. TOUPIN: Mr. Speaker, as the statement indicates, these statistics are derived from the Bureau of Statistics of Canada.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

MR. G. JOHNSTON: By way of clarification, I ask again. Did the newly formed

(MR. G. JOHNSTON cont'd) Manitoba Bureau - if that's the correct terminology - of Statistical Information have anything to do with this statement?

MR. TOUPIN: Mr. Speaker, my answer is the same. These figures were derived from the Bureau of Statistics of Canada.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Health and Social Development. I wonder whether he can indicate to the House whether the government used any outside consultants or had an outside consulting report with respect to the determination decision that was made on the use of the old Grace Hospital?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. TOUPIN: Mr. Speaker, quite a few citizens in the Province of Manitoba were consulted before a decision was arrived on pertaining to what could be done with the facility at the old Grace Hospital site. There were consultants that were hired by the Department of Health and Social Development - not specifically to come up with a recommendation to myself regarding the use, but some of them were involved.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Well the second question to the Minister of Health and Social Development. Were the outside consultants who he referred to, did they furnish the department, the Minister or someone in the department a report which was the basis on which the decision was made for the use of the old Grace Hospital?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. TOUPIN: Mr. Speaker, there were recommendations not on the form of a report that the honourable member would ask me to table in the House.

MR. SPIVAK: I wonder then if the Minister of Health and Social Development can indicate whether there were any recommendations that were furnished to his department from Planning and Priorities for the use of the old Grace Hospital?

MR. TOUPIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, as the Honourable Leader of the Official Opposition knows, the Planning and Priority sub committee of Cabinet at certain points could have been involved. They're consulted on many things that pertain to policy.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition has had two supplementaries.

MR. SPIVAK: I have another question for the Minister of Health and Social Development.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. SPIVAK: I wonder if the Minister . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. JEAN ALLARD (Rupertsland): I have a question for the First Minister. Could he indicate to the House when approximately we'll be receiving the Leaf Rapids agreement and the information that he agreed to give.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: M. le Président, comme j'ai dit déjà, avant longtemps, mais exactement je ne sais pas . . .

Translation:

Mr. President, as I already said, 'before long, but when exactly, I don't know . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: I have a question to the Minister of Health and Social Development. I wonder whether he can indicate whether there was more than one recommendation for his consideration and for the Cabinet decision on the use of the old Grace Hospital, or was the recommendation of the consultants unanimous for the use that is being proposed?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health and Social Development.

MR. TOUPIN: Mr. Speaker, I considered many recommendations before arriving at a policy that was decided by Cabinet.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Well this is a supplementary question. I'm now asking the Minister whether he received more than one recommendation from the outside consultants that he referred to with respect to the use of Grace Hospital or whether unanimous . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Order, please. I do believe the honourable member is aware that the same question with slight variation is not permitted. I think he's asked it about four times now. He should follow our procedures. The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. ALLARD: M. le Président, j'ai une question supplémentaire pour le Premier

(MR. ALLARD cont'd)Ministre. Est-ce qu'il aurait la bonté de nous dire à peu près, parce qu'enfin cela fait depuis deux semaines à peu près, que nous aurons une version, dans quelques jours, trois jours . . .

Translation:

Mr. President, I have an additional question for the Premier. Would he be so kind as to tell us approximately, because it is already about two weeks ago now, that we would have a version, in a few days, three days . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, because of the acoustics or the noise in the Chamber I didn't hear every word of the honourable member's question, but as I indicated to the honourable member on at least one other occasion it is certainly anticipated that the agreement can be made available and tabled here in this House certainly by the time when the Estimates of the Department are before us, and that shouldn't be very long. I should think probably toward the end of next week. The agreement as far as I know certainly has been finalized but whether or not there is a printed version copies thereof available as yet I don't know.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: I have a question for the Minister of Health and Social Development. I wonder whether the Minister can indicate whether either he or the Minister of Colleges and Universities who I believe was also present at the meeting, have communicated the decision with respect to Grace Hospital to the Grace Hospital Citizens' Action Committee or its chairman?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health and Social Development.

MR. TOUPIN: Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated in the House yesterday the Minister of Colleges and Universities and myself have met with "a" Action Committee in the Wolseley constituency in the last month and I believe that all the citizens that are concerned in the Province of Manitoba were advised yesterday.

MR. SPIVAK: I wonder whether the Minister can indicate whether it's his intention to meet again with the Action Committee?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health. The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. SHERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct a question to the Honourable the Minister of Labour and ask him whether in connection with the minimum wage is the government giving consideration to the study and the findings of Professor Allan Carmel?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. PAULLEY: The Department of Labour in this government is prepared at all times to give consideration to any suggestions made by anybody in the Province of Manitoba or outside of it as well.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for -- Order, please. The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. SHERMAN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Labour. Does the government share the view that the study by Professor Carmel constitutes an in-depth study of the entire subject?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. PAULLEY: I don't know.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill. The Honourable for Fort Garry.

MR. SHERMAN: A further supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the Minister undertake to acquaint himself with the findings of Professor Carmel -- and the recommendations of Professor Carmel in his study?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. It's not relevant whether the Minister does or doesn't. The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. GORDON W. BEARD (Churchill): I would like to direct a question to the First Minister. I understand the contract for supplying the DEW Line has been awarded to a new company. I wonder if the Minister could advise us whether this will -- whether he can tell us whether the supplies will continue to be supplied to Manitoba through the East?

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, there have been a number of actions taken by the Federal Ministry or Department of Transport and other Federal Departments which have militated against the future growth and development of the Churchill Port. Certainly in this

(MR. SCHREYER cont'd) specific case that the honourable member refers to we will make representations to attempt to ensure that supply is as much as possible made through the Port of Churchill.

I would take advantage of this opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to invite the Member for Churchill, to join in making representation to Ottawa with respect to the Great Plains Project and what seems to be the intent of that project to bypass the Port of Churchill I think in terms of a \$300 million new Port at Chesterfield Inlet, which I believe is based on inaccurate assumptions.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Riel.

MR. DONALD W. CRAIK (Riel): Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the First Minister. Can he advise whether the reports on the studies for the alternative diversion for the Churchill River are going to be available to the Members of the Legislature?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, we have followed the practice of making reports and documentation available to a greater extent than in years gone by and certainly I would think that documentation that's available to us with respect to the technical aspects of the diversion can be made available to the honourable member.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Riel.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, a further question to the First Minister. Can he advise when the first or preliminary report of the Manitoba Water Commission will be made available?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: I am advised, Mr. Speaker, that the Commission is considering a draft and therefore I assume from that alone that a report should be imminently available.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

MR. FRANK JOHNSTON (Sturgeon Creek): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Has the Salvation Army or Grace Hospital Salvation Army received payment as yet for the old Grace Hospital?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health and Social Development.

MR. TOUPIN: Mr. Speaker, I did indicate in the statement that I made in the House yesterday that the agreement and the purchase of the old Grace Hospital was final.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Was the agreement finalized two months ago and have they received payment yet?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. TOUPIN: Mr. Speaker, we have been negotiating with the Salvation Army for at least a year and a half if not more. The legal documents were made final just shortly before the statement was made in the House.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon West.

MR. EDWARD MCGILL (Brandon West): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Honourable the First Minister relating to Hydro matters. Inasmuch as the Chairman of Hydro, Mr. Cass-Beggs, referred to a specific meeting of the Hydro Board as the one at which the conclusions were reached in respect to the diversion - that of May 17th - is the First Minister prepared to table the Minutes of that meeting for the House?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. If this is something that is before a Committee that hasn't reported I must indicate that it is out of order. The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. SHERMAN: My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the Honourable the First Minister. I would like to ask him whether Versatile Manufacturing has communicated to the government any change in plans or reconsideration of its plans to expand into North Dakota?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, one of the officers of the company in question has given indication that because of recent changes in tax law at the Federal level, reduction of some 7 percent or approximately 7 percent, in Corporate Federal Tax, that the Company may well reconsider any idea it may have had, if it had any, to locate in North Dakota where I understand, Mr. Speaker, the Estate Tax, Succession Duty Tax is higher than here.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Emerson.

MR. GIRARD: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Honourable the First Minister. I would like to know if the decision to centralize the service regions of Hydro in

(MR. GIRARD cont'd) the rural parts of the province is a decision that is irrevocable?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, the honourable member has some concept of decisions being irrevocable. He may well be right. Certainly efficiency of operation cannot be traded off completely against other considerations. However, more specifically, may I advise the honourable member that what is involved here is rationalization of rural Hydro district service centres or offices and it is the intention to combine a number of one-man district offices with others so as to make for two-man operations which allows for staggered hours and so on of servicing and work by the men themselves. However, it is not the intention to require any of these people to move from the communities in which they now reside. What's basically involved is commuting distances of perhaps 15, 20, 25 miles, but this apparently is quite manageable.

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

MR. STEVE PATRICK (Assiniboia): I have a question for the Honourable Minister of Industry and Commerce. I see he's not in, perhaps I can direct my question to the Minister of Tourism and Recreation.

Mr. Speaker, my question is is the Lord Selkirk II now in service? Is the boat Lord Selkirk the second -- is it now in service?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Order of the Day. The Honourable Minister of Tourism and Recreation.

HON. LAURENT L. DESJARDINS (Minister of Tourism) (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, I'll have to take that as notice.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Assiniboia.

MR. PATRICK: A supplementary. Can the Minister also advise the House when he takes the question as notice how much money was expended to put the boat into service and what are the bookings up to the present time of the total sailing dates?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. That question would be better on an Order for Return. The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, if I may, I would like to advise the Honourable Member for Assiniboia, in fact all honourable members of the House -- this is more a notice of convenience to them so as to avoid any inconvenience on their part -- I would like to announce that the bookings on the Lord Selkirk, MS Lord Selkirk are filled for the season. It would be unfortunate if honourable members tried to obtain a booking and went through the bother of it and found that they couldn't obtain one.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the First Minister. I wonder whether he can indicate to the House whether it is the projections of the government that there will be a profit or a loss on the operation of the Lord Selkirk this year?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, I understand that the initial concept that lie behind the decision in the first place to proceed with the building of the ship was that some fashionable hotel in the City would take over the winter operation of the vessel and operate it as a hotel nightclub. Unfortunately that wasn't proceeded with but the initial concept still remains an excellent one and it may well be that we will proceed with such a course of action. And my honourable friend I think knows which fashionable hotel I am referring to.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of the First Minister, I do not. Mr. Speaker, may I ask the First Minister whether the government has, and I believe he is the one in charge of hospitality grants within this province, I wonder whether he can indicate whether it will be the practice of the government to offer hospitality by offering the use of the Lord Selkirk rather than a direct grant?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, I assume that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition made that suggestion in a serious vein and I accept it in that manner as well. Certainly the matter merits consideration. So far as the workings of the hospitality grant arrangement it is by a sub-committee of public servants which includes Mr. Derek Benson.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Well, another question to the First Minister. Has the government not in fact offered hospitality through the use of the Lord Selkirk as a substitute for a direct grant in connection with requests that have been made to the Government?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, I don't believe so and if it were it would be only in an isolated number of cases. I would be very surprised if this were a prevalent suggestion or practice on our part.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the First Minister. Since he has knowledge of the bookings on the Lord Selkirk, can he advise the House if the Department of Health and Social Services again are renting it for meetings?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, there are some people in politics who know how to play the psychology of certain things and I have to confess that in that respect I am at least equal to the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek. There is something psychologically unacceptable about a Department of Health and Welfare arranging for a meeting or seminar on a Lake vessel. On the other hand, it needs to be said, Mr. Speaker, that if one compares the cost of hotel accommodation plus meals for those attending, compares it with the rate on the MS Lord Selkirk it works out to parity. So really there is not great criticism to be levelled here against any department that should want to make such arrangements. Except that psychologically politically it's stupid.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Just on that question, could the meetings not have been held in the Norquay Building?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Well, Mr. Speaker, I do believe that meetings, seminars of smaller group size do take place within the building here or within the Norquay Building. Oftentimes however -- and this goes back many years -- arrangements have been made for the booking of hotel accommodation, salon room accommodation for meetings and seminars and we have not in any way changed this.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Assiniboia.

MR. PATRICK: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the First Minister, a supplementary. He stated and taken some satisfaction that the vessel was booked for the whole season. Perhaps he can tell us, what is the season -- is it 30 days, 60 days or 120 days? I have a second part to that question. Since the vessel is booked for the whole season is the government giving any consideration to construction of another boat?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, the season in question is the navigation season and more specifically it is the tourist season within the navigation season which would span a period of three months, possibly three months and two weeks, approximately. That's the time frame.

So far as whether consideration is being given to a second vessel, I would say that kind of question is certainly premature until after a successful season, possibly two successful seasons of operation. After all the honourable member should appreciate that it is not as though we had it in mind in the first place to end up with the operation of a lake vessel, but was rather forced upon us by the circumstances of a loan to a private sector company that was in certain respects ill-conceived in the first place.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. JORGENSON: Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct my question to the First Minister and ask him how many of those bookings that he outlined earlier have been made by the various departments of the Province Government?

MR. SCHREYER: The honourable member can file an Order for Return, but I can advise him that I am not aware as to whether or not the Mayor and Council of Morris have made any applications in order to meet with Western Flyer Coach on board the MS Lord Selkirk, I don't know.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon West.

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Speaker, for the First Minister. Does the Lord Selkirk qualify as designated accommodation for civil servants when travelling on company business by offering a discount?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: I couldn't say, Mr. Speaker, but it may well be an excellent idea.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. SAUL CHERNIACK, Q.C. (Minister of Finance) (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable the Minister for Municipal Affairs 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 Logan in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution 95 (a). The Honourable Member for Souris-Killarney.

MR. EARL McKELLAR (Souris-Killarney): I would like to say a few words on the Minister's salary, Municipal Affairs. Say that I enjoyed the Committee meetings that were held this past winter, studying Local Government Districts, the 15 meetings that we held across the various areas of the province, listening to the people tell us what they thought should be the changes in this particular Act that would be necessary to improve their situation in Local Government Districts. So far we have noticed there is no legislation. I don't know whether it's the intention of the Minister to bring legislation at this session or not, maybe he could tell us in his reply.

But many of the problems that came to my attention during our travels there were as I saw it, being a farmer myself, the No. 1 problem was drainage. On the application of Local Government Districts, their ability to raise monies to finance drainage, especially when there were so many farms that were owned by the Crown, and I was not aware at that time, until they explained to me that when the land goes up for a tax sale, it automatically goes to the Crown, and there is no chance to buy it back during a three year period, or for someone else to buy that particular parcel of land, and it's more noticeable down in the southeastern portion of the province. This particular problem where the large amounts of attractive land were owned by the Crown, making it practically impossible to make drainage ditches across that particular area because of the few taxpayers that would have to pay the brunt of that particular drainage ditch. I was wondering if some other arrangement, other than the policy that is presently held by the Department of Mines and Natural Resources, and Water Control, some other policy couldn't be devised for areas in Local Government Districts that would improve their situation on drainage.

Our situation in the municipality where I live in, are quite different because practically all the land is owned by individuals and if you want to put a drainage ditch in, each one assumes their share of the cost, and we don't have the drainage problem that they do in these particular areas, especially up in the Duck Mountain areas, and more so over here around Pine Falls and St. George, there are a lot of drainage problems there and especially more so in the southeast. I was wondering if the Minister through the Department of Mines and Natural Resources was thinking of having a change in policy to meet the needs of these local government districts.

Now one of the problems that concerns many of the people, farmers, in my area, concerned them for many years is assessment and the formulas that are used to base their assessment on, and it seems to never satisfy anyone. I don't know, it's just a - the farmers are never very happy when a new assessment is taken, and I was wondering if there had been any thoughts in the department to come up with a new policy on assessment, some new plan for assessment, that would meet the needs of the farmers' ability to earn. Right now we are having a rough time because of low prices on grains, wheat, oats, and barley; flax is selling lower than it has for many years, and the people cannot see why the assessments should be as high as it was maybe 10 or 15 years ago when the price of grain was quite a lot higher.

Another thing on assessment I would like to discuss -- I always thought it would be a better plan if you are going to do a re-assessment in an area, that you do it over all the municipalities in a school division because when you are applying new assessment, while you do have a means of coming up with an equalized assessment, I think that you would be better to do a new assessment on all the municipalities within a particular school division. I know it is quite true that school division boundaries don't always apply to municipal boundaries but I

(MR. McKELLAR cont'd) think it could be done, a new assessment could be taken on all these municipalities within this school division. I think that would be a better way of handling it rather than having one municipality done one year, and another one done another year, and so on, within that particular school division.

Now I would like to say a word on planning, and this has always been an objection in some of the towns, larger towns, that have contracts with the Planning Branch within the Department of Municipal Affairs, that by the time the Planning Branch get around to approving something, some of the original, the people have originally intended on building get discouraged and withdraw, and what happens is that nothing is accomplished. I wish there was some quicker way of coming up with a yes or no answer on planning within a particular given area. One instance that was brought to my attention by an area that I used to represent and the problem - and I guess this was actually handled finally, appealed through the Municipal Board - the trailer lot that was proposed in the Municipality of Cornwallis, and it was turned down. Knowing this area, given area, the road between Brandon, Shilo and the low road, I can see no real objection personally why the Planning Branch and the Municipal Board say that should be located in Brandon, I know what's going to happen. I know what's going to happen -- when one trailer lot was already built in the municipality where I live in Oakland, a distance of 10 miles from Brandon, the Municipality of Oakland, and this is what's going to happen: if the Municipal Board are going to turn every proposed trailer lot down in the Municipality of Cornwallis, the people will in turn just move out to Oakland where we don't have to worry about planning. We don't have planning regulations because they haven't joined up. All they have to do is get approval from the Department of Highways to get an access off the road, off the highway, if it's off No. 10 Highway. I think we are doing the municipalities a disservice, in this case the Cornwallis Municipality, because this is around a \$300,000 trailer park that is proposed. It was going to be built on about a three year scale, so much each year, and I think it would have served the people of Brandon, the people of Shilo, and that whole area in a fine fashion, and it's something that's needed in Brandon, trailer courts are needed.

Now we do have in our municipality another benefit, practically equal to Cornwallis, in fact in Oakland, in taxes. We have a pipeline that runs through our municipality. This is another reason which is tax advantage by building their trailer parks in Oakland because we have this given pipeline, it pays about 30 percent of the mill rate for the municipality and there is no expense at all to our particular municipality, and if the Planning Branch and the Municipal Board don't get along, or can't see eye to eye, all they are doing is chasing development out a little farther south, this is what's going to happen.

Now regarding housing, I'd like to say a word on this. Our government, when we were the government of the day, provided housing for elderly persons which was an excellent program, and I think the many fine housing programs across this province, many of them were started during that period of time. I am a little worried, a little concerned, how far we are going into the housing, low rental housing. We have some in Killarney. I can really see no objection because there is a demand in Killarney. There is a good demand, a lot of people are moving into Killarney. Now I can see where there would be advantages taken maybe on this particular housing. They build apartment blocks and they build single family homes, and many of the people where there was no housing available were taking advantage of this particular low rental housing. Now what the problem is and in some of our communities in the rural parts, and some of them aren't growing the way they should be growing, and if you put low rental housing in there all you are doing is switching people from private housing which they had rented over to this low rental housing. And while it's true that they are making studies, going on in each individual community to assess the demand, I think in many cases what will happen that many of these people will have to - there will be no sale for their particular housing. I think that we should not go into this program too fast. It might be a different situation in Winnipeg; Brandon is growing some; but I think what we're doing, we're reducing the numbers of private housing and increasing the numbers of public housing. Whether that's good or bad, time will only tell. All I'm saying is for the Government to go at this program in a cautious manner. It's something that I think they'd better walk before you run, and we'll have to assess that at a later date.

Now I wouldn't be right if I didn't say something on Autopac. I think I should express my viewpoints once again. It's well known where I stand on Autopac. It's well known I have always said the government should never go into any program as long as it is properly being

(MR. McKELLAR cont'd) handled by the private sector -- (Interjection) -- private. There again, there's the Attorney-General speaking not from his seat but an interjection.

Mr. Chairman, I could tell the Honourable Attorney-General that the Law Society is not being properly handled by all the lawyers in the province and that statement is true. They are not doing their job properly. But, Mr. Chairman, we don't go around cancelling out lawyers just because they are not doing their job properly. We try to improve the situation, we try to improve it, not change it. Mr. Chairman, I'm a Commissioner of Oaths, with a little more background I could advise people how to do some of the legal points, because that's what the lawyers are advisers, they are advisers, but I'm not saying for one minute we should do away with the lawyers, they are a necessary evil in the community, a necessary evil, sure.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MACKLING: You say that you are not asking that we take over all the lawyers, but are we asking the people of Manitoba to make their use of lawyers compulsory?

MR. McKELLAR: With all these tax laws you've got in, it's practically impossible - you have to have a lawyer, you have to have an accountant. You've got the greatest guaranteed income for two professions that ever was made right in this session, right in this session. Guaranteed income for your profession and for the chartered accountants. The fat cats of our society right there. Nothing for the farmers, all for the lawyers and accountants. -- (Interjection) -- It's compulsory to use a lawyer. I want to get back to Autopac because that's more important. I have only got so much time and I'm going to make use of it.

There is nothing wrong with having insurance compulsory, nothing wrong. It still isn't compulsory, it still isn't compulsory to go out on the highway and you have insurance. It isn't compulsory. I do it every day, every time I drive a tractor on the highway. I don't have a licence, I don't have a licence on my farm tractor, and I tell you if you drive up the highway and see the number of farm tractors on the roads these days, not only with the tractor with a drill behind it, with a cultivator behind it - did you ever think of the number of uninsured motorists in the Province of Manitoba -- (Interjection) -- lots of them, lots of them, every day you go out on the road. It's not compulsory to license a tractor, and I know enough about insurance, I know how many people are insured with farm tractors. The only way you can insure a farm tractor with legal liability on your farm, it covers blanket policy, any negligence on behalf - with any farm implement on your farm, and any individual.

Mr. Chairman, I'm not debating with the Honourable Attorney-General, I'll debate with him any time, I'm talking with the Minister of Municipal Affairs. I would like him to keep quiet for a few minutes. Mr. Chairman, I wasn't here last night for the opening statement at 8:00 o'clock to hear the Honourable Minister but - the honourable member sitting next to me said I didn't miss anything -- because I heard that song and dance so long. I heard that song and dance so long that it is just ringing in my ears that the government has the finest insurance scheme on the North American continent.

The Honourable Member for Rhineland said last night - what are you going to compare it to? A monopoly, monopoly. Mr. Chairman, this is not the finest insurance scheme in the North American continent. I'll take Wawanesa Mutual any day ahead of the Government of Manitoba, their Autopac, and I'll tell you why. I'll tell you why, I'll tell you why. I want to tell you where Wawanesa stand in the Dominion of Canada, and that's the only thing I can prove because they don't have any rights to Manitoba, none at all. They are washed out; they are told they're not wanted. But where do we stand in the Dominion of Canada on automobile insurance? I'm going to tell you, I am going to tell you where they stand right now. They are fourth in all the companies writing automobile insurance in Canada. And how much automobile insurance did they write in Canada last year? Forty million dollars. Forty million dollars. That's a record second to none, a record second to none. A company born in a town of 500 population -- (Interjection) -- No, I tell you when I've got something to talk with you, I'll talk to you in Agriculture, that's what I'm -- you stay out of this. -- (Interjection) -- Mr. Chairman a company born 1896 in the Village of Wawanesa were told two years ago that they weren't wanted in the Province of Manitoba. They weren't wanted, they weren't wanted. They can only operate out of nine other provinces. They weren't appreciated. All the millions of dollars that they had contributed to the tax coffers of the Province of Manitoba through corporation taxes, through premium tax, and now they are told they are not wanted. Is that the kind of government that we need in the province of Manitoba? I say no. We need a government of the day who is going to recognize the efforts of all the Manitobans. The ones of the past and

(MR. McKELLAR cont'd) the ones that are here now, men like Scott Bryce who was trying to do his best for the Province of Manitoba, trying to make something, not only out of the company he operates, but out of this province, and trying to do what he can, for his own community.

Let's talk about Portage Mutual. Let's talk about another Manitoba born company, where I am very closely associated with. Another company who has done a wonderful thing since 1884, pioneers in the district where my honourable seat mate comes from, started this company. There is one director on that board now that's a fourth generation, fourth generation, and this is the way they carry on. Most of the directors come from the local community of Portage la Prairie. Men who have contributed to the Province of Manitoba and to the insurance industry of this great province. This is the kind -- (Interjection) -- they are told too that they're not wanted in the Province of Manitoba, they're not wanted at all, and yet they wrote \$4 million premium insurance last year, premium insurance in automobiles - they are not wanted. The great socialists across the way think they can do things better than any of these small communities could do. These are the communities that made this province, and you are trying to destroy them, trying to destroy them, chase everything into Brandon and Winnipeg. This is what's happening out our way. This is not the kind of decentralization that I'm looking for. I am looking for a decentralization from Winnipeg out to the rural parts of Manitoba. So where do they put the office, this Almighty building down on Portage Avenue, the plushiest building you could have found in Winnipeg, just moved in, brand new building, through a real estate agent, through a realtor who is on the Board of Autpac. He's the man that rented this premises to the -- he's the man. I've got the report here somewhere. He's the man that's on the Board of Directors - Mr. Leipsic, yes. He was appointed on September 29. This same man that has bought out about 18 agencies in the City of Winnipeg when he knew the government were going to get involved. This is the man. I read with interest, too, the rest of the directors. Quite a board! Quite a board! I know the man at the bottom there real well. He was the leading agent of Portage Mutual before he became a great socialist.

Mr. Chairman, the facts don't speak for themselves. The plan is not cheaper, the plan is not better, it's not doing anything for the industry in the Province of Manitoba and I would suggest to the government that they better take a second look at it. This great information that came out yesterday, I read with interest because I was always told that everybody was insured in the Province of Manitoba. I was always told. But did you ever read here, one great section in this book here, a little book here they put out, did you ever read it all? I think it's on page 24, "there is no coverage". That's just like a chapter in the Bible that the Honourable Member for Virden was telling us about when he was introducing it. This is the most important chapter in the Autopac Bible, "there is no coverage". I'd like every member in this House to read that one because they're going to get an education some day when they read that. They're going to get an education and find out -- some of the time in their life they're going to find they're not going to be covered when they're involved in an accident. Page 24 and page 25. And what difference is there? This great policy of the government of the day -- there is not one change in this policy they're trying to sell than what I was selling one year ago. No difference at all, sold everything the same. But now they're telling the public this is great, this is cheap and the public are not believing it, they're not believing it.

I want to put on the record here, Mr. Chairman, one company that I write for, and I'll defy -- on any car out in front of this building I can outsell, on extension coverage, I can beat on every car. Portage Mutual: 200,000 inclusive -- I'm talking on extension - \$50 deductible - \$21. Any car, it doesn't matter whether it's a Lincoln, Cadillac or what it is. A Lincoln or Cadillac. This is the kind of rates that we're selling. And the honourable member the Minister goes around preaching that they're doing everything better, everything cheaper. It's not so. I've saved people \$10 on extension policies by putting them with Portage. That's not the kind of advertisement we want. If the honourable member in the back row would shut up for awhile I'd be able to get on with my speech. He's the biggest yapper you ever saw in this Chamber.

MR. CHAIRMAN: One member at a time. The Honourable Member for Souris-Killarney. Order.

MR. McKELLAR: Mr. Chairman, I'll table it and that will prove everything. Now I'm going to talk a little on discrimination. I'm sure glad the Honourable Attorney-General is right in front of me here because he's a great master at discrimination. But in this little book here there is discrimination. I'm sure glad he gave this out because it sure helps my

(MR. McKELLAR cont'd.) speech. This is on page 7, another chapter in this Autopac Bible. Not very big this book but there's a lot of information there for people who can read it. That's the problem of the honourable gentlemen across the way, they don't know anything about insurance, they can't interpret it. They can't interpret, they can't interpret. Since when were there discrimination between a single person and a married person on accident benefits? Well the only time there ever was is when you got the Autopac in, Autopac. There's quite a difference. The difference is a wife and five children surviving, \$10,000 compared with a single person \$1,000.00.

I would suggest to the Honourable Minister Attorney-General that he better get the Human Rights involved here, not only is there discrimination between men and women, there's discrimination between the number of children he even has - surviving children. That's not the kind of law and justice we want in the Province of Manitoba. We want equality, equality between men and women as the Honourable Minister of Labour's always preaching. Equality, equality. If the honourable gentleman won't take this up with the Human Rights Commission I will myself. It's an injustice second to none. And it all goes through here. There's another injustice. When you buy your driver's licence, did you ever see the justice? What do they charge young people under the age of 25 for their driver's licence over top of the \$3 - \$22 for a boy. What do they charge girls under 25 - \$10; what do they charge men over 25 - \$7; what do they charge ladies over 25 - \$3. Discrimination again. Discrimination again. The very government that practices Human Rights are breaking the law every time they turn around. That's not the kind of justice I'm looking for, Mr. Chairman. I'm looking for fairness to all, fairness to all, fairness to all.

What happens to a farmer, what happens to a farmer if he lives in a village, if he lives in my little village there, he goes out one and a half miles to his farm out the road. He doesn't get a discount, he doesn't get a discount. You've got to live on a farm, you've got to live on a farm. That's not the way the other companies operated before. No, Sir, no, that's not the way the other companies operate. If you are a farmer, that's all it says, farmer. --(Interjection)-- Mr. Chairman, I want to give the facts, the truth. The honourable member never wrote a policy in his life. I know he took out a licence to sell insurance, He never wrote a policy. I don't know whether the company wouldn't allow him to or he just didn't have the ability, but he's telling me now he knows everything about insurance and he has never read the fine print in a policy. That's the kind of a Chairman of the Board we have running our province. I'll take Scott Bryce ahead of him any day, any day in the week.

This is the kind of advice, this is the sad thing about this whole exercise. You've got men on the board with no experience at all, no experience, and when they can't make a decision, when they --(Interjection)-- When they - would you shut up and let me get on with my job here. When this almighty board can't make a decision, who do they go to? The Cabinet. Then they have nobody who knows anything about insurance. That's the ones that pass the Orders-in-Council. They're the ones that know all about insurance. Mr. Speaker, I know my time is getting short . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The honourable member has two minutes.

MR. McKELLAR: I just wanted to read one statement here and I was at this meeting. It was held in Wawanesa, the Annual Meeting of the insurance company and he said here and I quote Mr. Triton: He said, "Automobile insurance buyers after over four months of ghastly experience with Autopac and the unredeemed promises of lower rates and better services would welcome return to the advantages of open competition for their business." --(Interjection)- Mr. Triton, Mr. Triton. And I agree with Mr. Triton and I agree with him for many reasons. That never in the history from now on will we know whether we're getting a good deal or a bad deal. Never in history because we've got nothing to compare it with. Never in the history will we know and the honourable member will have no way to tell whether it's cheaper or more expensive or not from now on. No expense, Steve. But I want to say in the interests of the public of Manitoba the best way to cure all these problems is to let the private insurers compete and then we'll find out, then we'll find out who is doing the best job. All this nonsense about you can get your claim done quicker. I haven't had a claim yet, thank goodness, because I wouldn't want to go through that performance. I'd sooner go down to a private garage and get my estimate and get it done in a hurry rather than line up for blocks. This is not cheaper. (Interjection)- Blocks, yeah. Sure going by all those used wrecks. That's not the best way to handle claims.

Mr. Chairman, I'm going to close by saying, I'm not going to move a motion to reduce the Minister's salary even though I think I should because I think he's done a disservice to the Province of Manitoba, through his socialist philosophy and the socialist philosophy of his members around him which will prove to be wrong.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. The member's time has expired.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Osborne.

MR. IAN TURNBULL (Osborne): Mr. Chairman, I would like first of all to congratulate the Minister of Municipal Affairs. He was responsible for Autopac and the Public Housing Program in the Province of Manitoba. He is one of the few Ministers that will give to a member of the Legislature a quick and accurate response to inquiries and who will deal with any inquiries as quickly as he and his staff can and I would like to thank him for that. As well of course as to thank him for the Public Housing Program that we have in Manitoba at the present time. I think that that program was long overdue; I know in my own constituency there are many people who do desire to sell their homes because perhaps one of the spouses has died and they would like to move into a senior citizens' apartment.

But really, Mr. Chairman, what I would like to speak about is the Minister's responsibility for Autopac and I rise really to speak on it because of the bombastic speech that just preceded my own contribution, the speech made by the Member for Souris-Killarney. It always baffles me, Mr. Chairman, that the Member for Souris-Killarney as a paid advocate of the insurance industry of Canada can arouse in himself the gall and the nerve to stand in this House to peddle his own monetary advantage. I thought, Sir, at the time that the Autopac Bill, Bill 56, was passed in this Legislature that there were at least three members on the other side, who if they had been honourable men should have not even voted on that bill, and these members were: the Member for Souris-Killarney, the Member for Roblin and the Member for Assiniboia.

MR. G. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, on a point of privilege.

MR. CHAIRMAN: A point of order or a point of privilege?

MR. G. JOHNSTON: The Member for Osborne . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. What is the member rising on, a point of order?

MR. G. JOHNSTON: Yes. The Member for Osborne has just made a statement about three members in this House not being honourable and because they were engaged in a certain type of business I would imagine. Now in the absence of two of the members, I am taking it upon myself to ask him to retract that statement. That it's very unfair, it is imputing dishonourable motives and that has no place in this House. I ask for a retraction.

MR. TURNBULL: Well, Sir, I will in deference for the Member for Portage la Prairie withdraw what he obviously regards as a slur on a member of his own party and two members of the Conservative Party and I will withdraw that allegation. And say instead Sir, that these three members that I have mentioned were in my opinion during the discussion, the debate on Bill 56, men who exerted or exercised rather, a judgment that was not perhaps the kind of judgment that I would have exercised if I had been selling automobile insurance and I was asked to vote on Bill 56. I would have withdrawn from the House during the vote on Bill 56 after having made my contribution to the debate.

These men, these men, Sir, did vote on that bill and I really don't think that they should have, and so having done that, having voted on the bill, they then continue since the passage of the bill to stand in this House and advocate their own particular monetary interest. Now I will leave it up to the Member for Portage la Prairie to decide whether that's a lack of judgment or whether it's a lack of integrity, or whether it's a lack of whatever he wishes to describe it as. But I think that the Member for Souris-Killarney is one of those individuals who really should give more consideration to the words that he utters in this House. He has, for example, today called the Minister responsible for Autopac "incompetent". I have not seen any incompetence on the part of the Minister responsible for Autopac. On the contrary I have seen a man who has been able to resist the incredible pressure that the insurance business in Canada can bring to bear on a political figure, pressure that I've seen exerted on private citizens in the Public Utilities Committee.

I will never forget, Sir, and I speak especially to the Member for Minnedosa because I've addressed him in this way before this session. I will never forget a private citizen coming before the Public Utilities Committee and while that private citizen was there for the purpose of expressing his views about Autopac - - I'm sorry, not about Autopac but about auto insurance - a note was circulated amongst the members attending the Public Utilities Committee meeting and that note, Sir, although I was not privy to the contents of it because it was circulated primarily to the Conservative members on that committee and the Liberals on that committee, that note defamed the character of that private citizen appearing before the committee, and to me, Sir, that was shameful, shameful that a member of this House would accept that kind of information from the insurance business in this country and circulate it to the members of the

(MR. TURNBULL Cont'd) committee. That information contained in that note could only have come from the files of the company that insured that private citizen. That's the kind of confidence betrayed that we saw exhibited by the Conservative members and by the Liberal members during the Public Utility Committee meetings considering Bill 56. I think that kind of rumour-mongering, that kind of character assassination typifies the members opposite - - some, I'm sorry, Sir, some of the members opposite - - that they will do behind a person's back what they will not dare confront them with, and that, Sir, I think is shameful and not becoming to a member of the Legislature of Manitoba.

Now, Sir, the Member for Souris-Killarney is back in his seat and I would like to just reiterate while he's here that I did say while he was out that I thought that his voting on Bill 56 was not an exhibition of the kind of judgment that I would expect of a member of the Legislature, and I want him to hear that. I think, too, that seeing he is back here, that his continuing speeches in this House on Autopac are based on assertions, are based on opinions and are not substantiated by fact. And now that he's back I want to tell him really why it was that I did get up to make a small contribution to these Estimates is this. That I make great effort to be in contact with my constituents, not the New Democratic Party members who are in the constituency but all people, even the President of the local Conservative Association whose home I was in some two years ago - - he's no longer the president mind you - - and that individual was of course very courteous, more courteous I think than some members opposite are in this House. But I would like the Member for Souris-Killarney to know this that when I speak to an individual in my constituency, and I find them like so many citizens of Manitoba, of Canada, of the world I guess, I find them not overly ready to make any remarks about the political situation, or about the issues of the day - about 40 percent of the people I find are like that. Very reluctant to speak. So depending on which of these people I happen to be speaking to - if I notice a car in a garage or something, I'll say, "you drive a car," and they say, "yes". And just to get them started I'll say, "Did your Autopac insurance premiums go up or down?" And then I have found that I have found one person in the last three, four, five weeks who has said his auto insurance premiums went up in any significant amount. Now this is a very subjective type of thing to do; it's a subjective questionnaire; I don't pretend to say that it's substantiated by a scientific survey. I'm just giving for the benefit of the Member for Souris-Killarney my personal impressions. The one person that said their auto insurance, their Autopac insurance premium went up said it went up by \$24.00, and of course I asked him, well, why is it? Didn't know why it went up, had no idea why it went up, and so we continued to talk and the guy said, "look", he said, "I don't want to talk to any socialist, okay." So I said, "Well now that's fine, if that's your opinion, if that's your opinion about me when you don't know me, you know nothing about me, then I assume your opinion about Autopac is based on the same ignorance." And he said, "Well maybe it is." And I said, "Now, why did your auto insurance go up \$24.00." He said, "I don't know." But the point, Mr. Speaker, I think is that it seemed that those people who are opposed to this government are going about the province claiming that their Autopac insurance premiums are up and that's the conclusion that I drew from this encounter with a private citizen in my constituency. He was, he said, a free enterpriser. But I tell you, Sir, I tell you that he's not going to reject a \$50.00 school tax rebate he's going to get this year, and he's not going to reject the \$140.00 maximum school tax rebate that he'll get next year either. He'll take those, he'll take the lower medical care premiums because he's a free enterpriser, you know. He gets what he can no matter where it comes from, I guess. That's his particular approach to these things.

So I thought, Sir, that I should stand and make this small contribution to let the Member for Souris-Killarney know that I think his remarks about insurance are not based, are not based on the facts. I think they're based on his desire to oppose the government, and you know that's fine. I admire his desire to get up and make bombastic speeches condemning the Minister for Municipal Affairs. That's what he's here for but I think he should really try to deal with the issue rather than these unsubstantiated opinions that he is throwing at us on repeated occasions.

I must say, Sir, that if I was in the market for private insurance, and I had need for insurance because of the rising rate of break and entry, and theft, and what not, around the City of Winnipeg, and I understand the country too, if I was in the need of insurance, Sir, I would not go to the Member for Souris-Killarney to ask for that insurance coverage. I wouldn't ask him to sell me a premium because I don't think he knows anything about insurance, and if he approached me to sell me an insurance policy I would treat him as I do many people who

(MR. TURNBULL Cont'd) come to sell me insurance. I would say, look Mister, I don't think you know what you're talking about; you won't give me the facts about this policy; you won't give me comparative rates with one company and another, therefore you won't provide the service I want from you, so take off. And I would tell my Member for Souris-Killarney to take off. I might even assist him if he came to my house. Because I've dealt with insurance salesmen like the Member for Souris-Killarney and I have found them uninformed, incompetent, and uninterested really in providing the kind of service that they say they wish to provide.

Now, Sir, if I may I would like to come to another reason why I thought I would stand and make a small contribution to these Estimates, and it's because on two occasions this morning members opposite have attempted to say to the government members in the backbench here that they should not speak up in the Assembly. Now the Member for Souris-Killarney was retorting to an interjection that I have made and his retort of course was lacking in all humour, or lacking in all wit, it was merely rude, but I suppose when the member is speaking he is entitled to do what he can to quieten the heckler. If he can't do it with style, he may as well do it with brute force, if he can muster that up. But the other member on the other side, Sir, the House Leader, stood this morning and attempted to infer that the members of the backbench should be silent on Estimates, and I tell him, Sir, if he's speaking for his party, I despise, I despise the attitude that can find utterance in a House Leader when he attempts to silence members of the backbench, or attempt to impute motives to them for their speeches. I stand, Sir, to make a small contribution to the Estimates because I have certain opinions about Autopac, because I have certain opinions about public housing, and I might not have stood if the House Leader had not this morning attempted to say that I should not speak because I was a member of the backbench, and if that I did speak I obviously was protecting a Minister. I don't need to protect the Minister of Municipal Affairs. He has confronted the auto insurance industry of this country with all their despicable tactics, with all their cloak-and-dagger tactics, with all their defamatory tactics of private citizens, he doesn't need me to protect him. He has stood against stronger men than there are anywhere on that bench, on those benches over there. He certainly doesn't need me to protect him against the bombast of the Member for Souris-Killarney, or the bombastic speeches of any of the other bombastic members in the Conservative Party.

But I think, Sir, that it is important for the members of the backbench to contribute to the Estimates of the Minister of Municipal Affairs, the Minister responsible for Autopac, and I would urge every member on the backbench now, seeing we've been told to be quiet by the House Leader of the Conservative Party, to stand and speak for 40 minutes because if he thinks that he's going to silence me by making those kinds of remarks, and those kinds of points of order, in this House, I tell him that I will get up on every government departmental estimate from now on and speak for as long as I am able to, without of course preparing anything, without attempting to make any debating points, because I think that the Minister for Municipal Affairs and the other Ministers can do that. But to get up and to tell the Minister or the House Leader of the Opposition Party, and all the bombastic members over there, all the bull mooses over there, that if I want to speak on the Estimates, I, as a private member of this Legislature, will speak, and there is nobody over there that will silence me, and there is nobody over there that can impute motives to me either, because my motive for speaking is not to protect the Minister, my motive for speaking is to protect my right as an individual member to speak in this Assembly as often as I feel like, and to hell with the Member for Morris.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. CHAIRMAN: Just a moment before I recognize the Honourable Member for Rhineland, I would like to draw the attention of the honourable members to the gallery on my right where we have 41 students of Grade 4 and 5 of the Elphinstone School under the direction of Mrs. Pederson and Mrs. McIntyre. These students are from the constituency of the Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell. On behalf of all honourable members we bid you welcome to the Assembly.

The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Cont'd)

MR. FROESE: Mr. Chairman, last night I had the opportunity to speak a few minutes

(MR. FROESE Cont'd) before the hour of adjournment and so I wish to complete my remarks at this time. I did mention several items that I felt were very important under the Minister's Estimates, but I have some more ideas and also matters to bring to his attention. Certainly his Estimates cover the matter of assessment and I still haven't forgotten the debates that we've had in past years when we discussed assessment in this House as it refers to the assessment branch of this province, and I want to take issue with the way farmlands are being assessed in southern Manitoba. Recently a Rhineland Municipality was reassessed, and I think Stanley will be reassessed, and not too much damage is taking place as a result of the assessment. Yet the assessment way back in 66 when those municipalities were reassessed the amount was doubled, the assessment was doubled, and that was excessive, it was much too high, and the increase wasn't warranted. And what do we find now in the reassessment? Very little change, especially on the west half of the Rhineland Municipality. The eastern half where you have the heavier lands there has been a reduction but on the western half, very little change and I think this is not proper. I feel that because of the situation, and especially market value which was one of the considerations when assessment was made the previous time, and we have had a large reduction in value of farmlands in southern Manitoba, especially where the high prices were paid at one time. And I feel that this change has not been reflected in the assessment that has been made recently in Rhineland Municipality, and I do hope when the Stanley Municipality is reassessed that this will be reflected in the assessment when it's completed.

Then too I think productivity has been mentioned before should be taken into consideration to a much greater extent than it is because we have other areas in this province that produce as much, or even more - I know the Portage plains, and you have other areas in north-western Manitoba that produce very good crops - and yet the assessment of those properties are much below those of the southern Manitoba, especially the area that I represent, and I feel that a change must be made in this department.

Then, too, I mentioned the value has gone down of the properties that have been sold. At one time land was sold for 200, 250 even as high as \$300 an acre, while those prices have plummeted down, away down, and land is being sold for 65, 75 some will go 100 and even 125, but the high prices of farm land is gone. There are several reasons for it because the margin that the farmer gets today is next to nothing, especially in the Red River Valley where the cost of operating farmland is much higher than elsewhere in the province, and this is borne out in the report of Dr. Craddock and his report on inter-regional competition in cereal grains in western Canada. The figures listed in his report are testimony and are evidence to this that the costs of production in that area are much higher. The report mentions that the cost to produce a bushel of wheat in the Red River Valley is \$1.44 a bushel. This is based on a long-term average and at a yield of 23-1/2 bushels an acre, and yet we find that northwestern Manitoba the average yield for that area of time is 21-1/2 bushels, but the cost of producing that bushel of wheat is 95 cents to \$1.00. It's only two-thirds of what it costs in the Red River Valley, and therefore I think this should be reflected in the assessment when the assessment is being made, because what happens, Mr. Chairman, as a result of the increased assessment, we in our area are paying an inappropriate amount, inappropriate portion of the educational costs of this province as a result of the high assessment and this is unfair because we already have a higher population in our area. We have a higher school enrollment and as a result the costs are higher, and then in addition to that because of the increased enrollment in that area, we also have to pay for costs of other areas because of the high assessment of farmland in that area. And, Mr. Chairman, this is uncalled for, this is something that has to be corrected and the Minister should see to it that a change is being brought about to correct the situation, and that in future assessments that some of these factors will be reflected when the assessment is being made. I mentioned before that as far as the Rhineland Municipality being reassessed and that part of it has had some reduction, but I feel the reduction there is not large enough, that the overall assessment of that municipality should have been reduced very much more than it has to date.

Mr. Chairman, I feel too that our municipalities should receive more assistance from this government. We've had an \$8.00 per capita grant now for a number of years and nothing is being done to alleviate the costs of the municipalities, and I feel that consideration should be given to alleviating the taxes of the municipalities in this province. After all they too, the tax monies again have to come from the farmer and he cannot afford to pay increased taxes when the cost-price squeeze is getting greater day by day and that incomes are negligible. There is hardly any net income for the farmer today. I think the hearings that the Agricultural

(MR. FROESE Cont'd) Committee had this winter brought this out and brought this home very strongly to the members of the committee. We heard a farmer just east of the City of Winnipeg - I forget, I think Mr. Eady, Beausejour - who said that his net income was roughly \$700 from a 1,200 acre farm. Well this is an indication as to what the net income is of the farmers in rural Manitoba, and he has a big farm where many of our farmers are much smaller, probably not even half that acreage, and certainly they find it as a result more difficult because the overhead as far as machinery is concerned is still there and is probably much greater per acre than on the larger farms. And too, I feel that we see what other provinces are doing, especially in British Columbia, which I like to refer to because it's a Social Credit administration, instead of an \$8.00 per capita grant they have a \$28.00 per capita grant, which is much much more. In addition to that they've increased it by another six and one half million this year, so the support to the municipality is much greater.

They have also in effect in that province the Home Owner Grant of \$185. I mentioned this briefly last night but again I think it's worthy of mention because this is a reduction in the taxes to the people in that province and therefore -- (Interjection) -- Pardon? Oh I haven't got too much time. Okay.

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

MR. WILLIAM URUSKI (St. George): The honourable member mentioned in his comments that the Province of British Columbia paid \$28.00 per capita grant to the municipalities. Could the member also state what type of cost the municipalities have to pay out of that grant, in comparison to the costs borne by the municipalities in Manitoba.

MR. FROESE: Well, Mr. Chairman, I imagine those costs would be very similar because the services that they provide are the same as in any other province, that certain of the roads have to be maintained, and this is what the cost that our municipalities are paying in this province. The other matter of relief, this has been pointed out before, and I brought this to the attention of the Minister of Health that some of our municipalities have welfare by-laws where others have not, and as a result those that have them they contribute a certain amount towards the cost of social allowances, or the Health and Welfare Department. So again here maybe the municipalities should all abolish their by-laws so that they wouldn't have to contribute anything toward the cost of that department and their programs.

I mentioned the \$185 Homeowner Grant, but that's not all they have implemented a new program whereby they give assistance to the aged. Those at 65 and over are getting an additional \$50 Homeowner Grant in addition to the \$185, making it a maximum of \$235, so that here the older people who are on a fixed income definitely are receiving much greater support than the people in our province, and no wonder so many of our people are leaving this province and going to other areas where they get more support and have lower taxes as well.

So this is why when honourable members try and indicate that B. C. has more unemployment, well I think this answers their question. I have pointed it out before that they have provided more jobs than any other of the western provinces in Canada, and certainly the rate of pay is much better too. If the honourable members want to know, the Canadian Statistical Review that was quoted by Dr. Weldon, the government's adviser on the Finance Department on Page 50 shows the comparison of the average weekly wages and salaries being paid in Manitoba as \$128.39, compared to British Columbia of \$159.14, which is very substantially more, so that these people are in a much better position to pay for costs than those in Manitoba. So here again, Mr. Chairman, is another point that I would like to make that there is more prosperity in that province and as a result the people certainly enjoy better incomes, more prosperity and an easier life as a result.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member from St. George.

MR. URUSKI: I am really interested in the honourable member's remarks insofar as the grants and the subsidies paid to old age pensioners, and the like in the province of B. C. But I would just wonder during his comments, does the member agree with the stand taken by the Premier of British Columbia with respect to the equalization payments from the have provinces to the have-not provinces, the stand that he has taken?

MR. FROESE: It's a good thing the member brings it to the attention at this time because I might not have commented on it, but I think what is involved here is development of our natural resources. If we would only develop our natural resources like the Social Credit administrations of the western provinces have done, we would not be a have-not province, we'd be a have province, and we would not require these doles or these gifts from the National Treasury which they collect from Alberta and British Columbia and then pass them on to other provinces such as

(MR. FROESE Cont'd) Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Surely enough we should be deriving much more revenue from our natural resources and from our mining industry than we do in Manitoba than we are - we are getting a pittance. It's less than \$2 million. Before this government came into Manitoba, before you got into office, we got more revenue from our natural resources than we do now, especially from International Nickel and those areas. I would certainly like to see this improved but what have you done as far as . . . holidays, and so on, and the expansion of new mines. In fact, because of this we are now getting less money and revenue from our resources than we did before. -- (Interjection) -- The Attorney-General says not so, well let him tell me, or let him show me, that this is not the case, because evidently it is the case. But to come to the question that's put by the member for Prince George, St. George -- (Interjection) -- well it would have been nice to refer to Prince George but let's - what about the prince from St. George - how would that be? You know I think the Liberal House Leader deserves a little credit on that because he made the suggestion. I think it was quite valuable.

Back to the question raised by the Member for St. George, who are the provinces that are really gaining under the federal program of Equalization Grants? Isn't Quebec by far the largest gainer of any of the provinces? We are not gaining that much. Our contribution that we get from the Equalization Program, or especially from the type where the other provinces are contributing to and is being divided among the provinces, we are not one of the big receivers. But I would like to see this province make gains and make strides forward so that we could get out of this position of having to rely on federal doles or federal payouts, that we should be able to make things go and make ends meet on our own and I'm not sure, whether - well I'm sure that some of the things that are going on today are not contributing toward the fact that we are improving here, that we will be improving. I have no quarrel with the \$140 grant that the government intends to pay out. In fact I will be supporting the bill although I feel that there are some inequities in it, and that I'll bring these to the attention when I'll be discussing the bill on second reading.

In addition British Columbia has the Home Acquisition Grants which I think are a great improvement over what we have in this Housing and Renewal Program. I feel that what we are getting in Manitoba as a result, many of our smaller towns that are getting a lot of this low rental housing they -- (Interjection) -- Oh yes, I think you've got a number of our municipal officials who are asking for certain things. I don't dispute that fact but still I don't believe in the principle of the thing. The principle of the thing is that we're getting a transient population. We are getting a population that is not making itself at home here, and as a result, if they don't make themselves at home here, what pride will they have in this province? If they are just -- (Interjection) -- just a shiftless population in Manitoba . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Point of order has been.

MR. JORGENSON: Surely to Heaven by this time, the Minister of Municipal Affairs has learned the rules of this Chamber. He constantly interjects other people while they are speaking, when he knows he's going to have the opportunity to reply when his turn comes. Surely plain courtesy would dictate to him that other people have the right to speak in this Chamber as well as he has, and if he'd shut up and listen to somebody else, he might learn something.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

MR. FROESE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. But I am really alarmed at what we see happening as a result of programs of this type where we are putting ourselves into a position of providing assistance in perpetuity towards programs of housing, national housing in this province, and I don't subscribe to that kind of system. I would like to see a program of assistance of a one time, where a family wanted to buy a home, give them a grant, and let's forget about it. And then, too, the people would be instigated, or the people would be advised to purchase a home, and make themselves a home, and take some pride in our province and in our country, and wanted to stay here. What this does is the very reverse. We are more or less following what the Soviet Union is doing, and the Socialist countries - building big housing projects and where families will probably occupy a room or two and the State is owner of the homes. I don't think people take pride in such -- (Interjection) -- Well I haven't got too much time, Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. WALLY JOHANNSON (St. Matthews): Is the honourable member aware of the fact that that great free enterprise country of West Germany has one of the most advanced public housing programs in the world?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

MR. FROESE: Mr. Chairman, that still doesn't change my attitude towards this. I don't subscribe to public housing as such, and to the support of public housing in the way it is done under the program - be it federal and provincial as it is constituted today. I feel that we should give assistance to young married couples, to older people who are acquiring their first home, give them an outright grant so that they can acquire a home of their own. Certainly this is what I would like to see, and this is what is being done in British Columbia and I think the idea is much preferable to what we are doing in Manitoba, and probably what is done in some of the other provinces as the Minister indicated the other day.

I mentioned the Socialist countries in Europe and we have, not relatives but friends who have relatives out there and who from time to time tell us what is happening and how they are living up there. If what we are doing under this program by providing low rental housing, and if a person is above that income and he's better off to get a lower income and as a result will then qualify for a low rental, surely what is going to be the end result? Will he go on welfare so that he'll have a lesser income and then go into low rental? Another thing that is happening today is that people who own homes today, because of the high taxes and so on, they will rent their properties and then go to one of these low rental units, and make money on the proposition, take advantage of the government subsidies that are paid from the taxpayers' money, and then in addition to that get an income from their own home that they are renting to other people. This is happening, this is not something - this is not fantasy, this is not something theoretical -- (Interjection) -- Pardon?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am just calling the members to order so that I can hear you.

MR. FROESE: This is fact, this is happening, and this is why I wanted to know, and mentioned yesterday, that I would like to know who the members of these various committees are in the province, who are looking after these low rental units, who are administering the program, because I would like to know, and I would also like to know just how the Minister goes about as to who they select; who is in charge of a certain housing program, let's say even in my area, who's in charge of the project of Altona? Who's in charge of the project in Winkler? I'm sure that the committee doesn't do the administration. They must have someone else who's in charge of collecting the monies and who does this, and what are we paying these people for this? I think this should go on record so that we know more exactly what we are doing in relation to this whole program as it is being exercised in this province today.

Mr. Chairman, I do have some further comments but I'll wait until we deal with them in the . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Rock Lake.

MR. HENRY J. EINARSON (Rock Lake): Mr. Chairman, I wanted to make a few comments in regard to the Minister of Municipal Affairs Department and say that listening to the comments of some of the other members, I think I'll start first with the Autopac Insurance Corporation. I think it's talked about as much as anything. As I see it, Mr. Chairman, the government is giving the people the idea that they are providing a better service, and they are providing cheaper insurance in this Province of Manitoba by merely saying the premium is probably less than what they were paying under a private insurance corporation. I think, Mr. Chairman, there is a lot more to it than just saying, discussing the premium aspect of our automobile insurance industry. I am wondering, Mr. Chairman, what is the total cost of the Crown corporation that has been established to date? The costs we are talking about, and this is a duplication you might say, Mr. Chairman, where we have an industry that's been operating for many many years in this province that have the facilities, and now we have the government getting involved in investing in those same kind of facilities. I am wondering what is the total cost of establishing these facilities in order that the Crown corporation is able to operate. That must be a considerable amount of money and when we look at the Estimates on just about all of the departments there must be a figure in just about every one of those departments that pertains to our Autopac Insurance Crown Corporation, and so that's another figure that I think should be totalled up when we are talking about the cost of automobile insurance to the travelling public of the Province of Manitoba. Here, Mr. Chairman, I'm wondering, will we ever know the true cost of automobile insurance to the people of this province. The only way we're going to know is that you don't just take and calculate how much money that the government is collecting in the way of premiums, but how much it is costing to administer as well. So we have to have a figure that gives a complete total picture of the cost to the taxpayer, because after all we pay an insurance premium to drive our vehicle. There is also a cost which

(MR. EINARSON Cont'd) comes out of the taxpayers' pocket in the way of income tax, in the way of Crown Corporation tax, how other way - unless we are given a complete financial statement of that Crown Corporation such as done by Manitoba Hydro or Manitoba Telephones. If this is going to be the case, Mr. Chairman, then I think we will be in a better position to assess the total picture as it pertains to the cost of automobile insurance.

One of the things I think, Mr. Chairman, I would like to reiterate for the record again insofar as automobile insurance is concerned, and I pleaded with the Premier and the Minister of Municipal Affairs, that if they thought there was something wrong with the way in which the automobile insurance industry was being operated, under that bill - and pardon me for taking the few minutes of repetitious time here, but I think it's worthy of making notation again, and because we have heard so much debate back and forth as to operating a Crown Corporation in competition with private enterprise. I couldn't help but feel that the Minister had all the legislative authority at his disposal if he felt that there was something wrong with a private enterprise operating that was providing service to the travelling public of this province, that he had that authority to tell us what the changes that were necessary to be made and he could make them. I was one who would certainly go along with them if they were legitimate and justified; without taking over the industry, without disrupting so much of the economic well-being of this province; without disrupting thousands of people that had chosen as their way of life and as their means of earning their bread and butter for themselves and their families, to sell insurance.

I think, Mr. Chairman, that this to me was a very valid and a very legitimate point but the government saw fit to do otherwise. I want to say, Mr. Chairman, and I ask you if it's not a fact, that the Minister of Municipal Affairs himself stated one time, and I know my colleague from Souris-Killarney made mention of the Wawanesa Insurance Company, and is it not a fact, Mr. Chairman, he admitted that Wawanesa Mutual Insurance Company was one company that Autopac could not compete with, that Wawanesa was providing a service that the government Crown corporation could not compete with, could not do better.

If my memory serves me correctly, Mr. Chairman, I believe the Minister did make a statement over the air waves that this was a fact, that that was one company that they couldn't do any better than Wawanesa Mutual Insurance Company had done. I'm almost certain that that is a fact, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. HOWARD R. PAWLEY (Minister of Municipal Affairs) (Selkirk): . . . a personal privilege I think to correct an indication that's given in the House that's entirely false. No such statement was ever made by myself.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Rock Lake.

MR. EINARSON: Well, Mr. Chairman, I didn't make the statement, I posed it in the form of a question and I thought I'd give the Minister the opportunity of placing before the record for himself as to whether it was correct, or whether it was incorrect. But, Mr. Chairman, I think that this is something that we should know as taxpayers of this province and the people of the Province of Manitoba should know, should have all the facts insofar as the total picture is concerned about automobile insurance in this province.

I want to deal briefly with our housing situation and the low-cost housing program that this government has engaged in. I know I want to say that it was a very delightful experience for myself here not so many weeks ago when the Honourable Member from St. Matthews, who was out to Crystal City to share with me in the opening of a Home there for - it was sort of described as a low-cost housing, but really it was a home for senior citizens. I think that it's a program that has been followed that the party that I'm a part of - a program that was started by our party a number of years ago and I think that it has served and is serving and hope in the future to continue to serve as a very worthwhile project, providing living accommodation for senior citizens of this province. The senior citizens' home in Crystal City that was opened here just a few weeks ago is something that I was very pleased to see happen.

I had one other area in my constituency, namely Cartwright, where there has been a great deal of difficulty and I want to say for the record, Mr. Chairman, that the Kinsmen Club is the organization through the town and the municipality of that area that has sponsored to establish a senior citizens' home for the people in that community. They had a letter of intent from the Minister's Department in their possession as of November 4th, I believe it was, in 1971, saying that it had been accepted and nothing further had been done until this spring

(MR. EINARSON Cont'd) when I was asked to engage in seeing what was the reason for the delay and I do want to say that I'm pleased that I understand now, just in this past week I believe, that negotiations are now going ahead with the intent of purchasing property in order that this project may be carried out.

I hope now, Mr. Chairman, that having gone that far, that the project is on its way and that the long delay after having a complete commitment from the Minister's Department that the project will come to realization this summer. I am making these comments, Mr. Chairman, because I am hoping that it will be a project that will be completed this year after the steps that have now been taken.

Another area that I'm wondering about and that is there has been talk of changing the boundaries of our rural municipalities. I don't know whether the Minister has any plans in this regard or whether the municipal boundaries are going to continue to be maintained as they are at the present time. We hear so much and it's been happening so often with this Government that they make statements to the public, and the kind of statements that they hope will appeal to the people, yet at the same time, things are going on in the departments whereby it seems to me that some of the civil service of their departments don't really know what the real policies are that are being developed and as a result we have sort of, the departments going two different ways. One way the message is getting to the people that some of the things that they had planned or hoped to do would not come to realization, while at the same time the key people within the Minister's Department are planning otherwise. I would hope that the Minister can indicate to us for this next year as to what is the situation so far as our municipal boundaries are concerned. I think this is something that the municipal people are interested in, are concerned about and would like to know before any policies are established insofar as the department is concerned.

I think, Mr. Chairman, with those few comments I would like to discuss further, there will be questions I want to ask in some of the resolutions within the department and I'll have something further to say then.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would like to direct the attention of the honourable members to the gallery on my left where we have 38 members of the North American Baptist College Choristers from Edmonton, Alberta. They are under the direction of Professor Abe Penner and are guests of the Honourable Speaker of the House. On behalf of all the honourable members of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly I bid you welcome.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Cont'd)

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member from Fort Garry.

MR. SHERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The consideration of these estimates was going rationally and responsibly and fairly constructively I think until the Honourable Member for Osborne made what he refers to as his contribution a few moments ago and I cannot leave the remarks of the Honourable Member for Osborne on the record unchallenged, Mr. Chairman.

The interesting and revealing thing about what the Member for Osborne had to say was that through all the agony surrounding Autopac, and the Minister was as sensitive to the agonies and the deliberations as anyone else, through all the appeals by individual citizens for their right to hang on to the businesses that they had built, for all the worry and concern that was demonstrated by men of 45, 50 and 55 years of age about the possible losses of their livelihoods, through all that period, that summer - the summer of 1970 - the one thing that the Member for Osborne remembers apparently through it all is the circulation of some alleged note which he says cast aspersions on the character of one of the citizens who appeared before the committee.

Well, I think that's particularly revealing and significant, not only of the lack of sensitivity of the Member for Osborne where humans and human livelihoods are concerned, but of members on the government benches in general, Mr. Chairman, when the one thing that sticks out in his mind from that anguish that the populace of Manitoba went through and that the legislators in this Chamber went through, is that one event, the circulation of an alleged critical

(MR. SHERMAN Cont'd) note. No word for the concerns that were brought to the committee room table by the individuals whose lives and livelihoods were affected; no word about the tears that were shed by people on both sides of the question, by people within and without the membership of the committee itself - just the fact that some note was circulated to which the Member for Osborne was not privy but on which he feels competent and capable to pass judgment today as to its contents. No word for the kind of character assassination - and that's his term with reference to the note he mentioned - to the kind of character assassination and the remarks of members on the government side directed at representatives of the industry and people who were appealing before the committee for a right to hear the case they were making for private automobile insurance and against the imposition of the government program. Terms such as "parasites" and "leeches" and "drags on society" used against and directed at individual citizens and members of the industry. If that's not character assassination then I ask you, Mr. Chairman, what is? But the Member for Osborne doesn't recall that. He recalls some note that he says was critical of a citizen who appeared before the committee. I wonder whether what was contained in that note, if indeed there was any such note of criticism, whether it was true or not? Perhaps the things that were contained in that note happened to be true, as many of the things that were said in the heat and the emotions of those committee hearings, I suggest even the Member for Osborne would have to admit were said in conditions and states of emotionalism. There were some exaggeration, some extravagance to many of the arguments used on both sides of the question. But there were many, many things that were laid before the committee by representatives of the private industry which were sincere and fundamental expressions of the anguish of people who saw their livelihoods going down the drain, and they in turn were attacked in terms, both direct and in the form of innuendo, by members on the government side as being participants in a useless industry that was a drag and a drain on society and they were parasites living off the backs of society and there is no pang of remorse on the Member's part for that kind of activity in that committee. I think that's very significant, Mr. Chairman, that this is the thing that the Member for Osborne says he'll never forget.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Chairman, the suggestion that members of the committee suggested that agents were parasites by direct reference to them being parasites is untrue. There are public records and transcripts which will substantiate this position. At no time was any such reference made at the committee hearings to that effect.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. SHERMAN: Well I am not going to get into an argument with the Minister over that. I recommend their record of the debates in this House, and in the Committee Room that summer and on the front steps of this Legislature and in the public arena all that year, I recommend a re-reading of some of those debates to him, if he challenges the suggestion that terms such as "parasite" were directed against members of the private industry.

Now the Member for Osborne has conveniently forgotten some of his own suggestions and innuendoes and veiled criticisms and disparagements of the private industry. I recall, and I am sure most members recall, that the Member for Osborne has made reference in this House, Mr. Chairman, to a survey, a purported survey that he took of residents in his area on the question of insurance . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Attorney-General on a point of order.

MR. MACKLING: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. My colleague the Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs raised an objection to characterization of the use of the term "parasite" by a member of this House, before either this House or the committee and the honourable member was called upon to reconsider I believe, called upon by the Minister of Municipal Affairs to consider his remarks, because no member of this House, either in the committee or in this House used such a term in description in debate, and ask him to recall that.

MR. SHERMAN: That's so absurd, that is so erroneous, Mr. Chairman, it's not even worth getting into a debate with the Attorney-General about it. The point I'm trying to make

. . . MR. CHAIRMAN: Speaking to the point of order, the Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MR. PAWLEY: I can't begin to let this go lightly. This comment has been repeated a

(MR. PAWLEY Cont'd) number of times. The origin of the term parasite is known to members; it originated outside of this House, at a meeting outside of this Chamber, outside of this building, outside of the grounds of the Legislative Building. No reference at any time was made to insurance agents as being parasites by members of the committee or by those making representations to the committee. The public transcripts will substantiate this and I do not think that members of this House should permit this statement to proceed to the degree that it casts a reflection upon the members of the House itself.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think the point is well taken. I think if the honourable member would reflect and perhaps during the noon hour have a look at the transcript and at Hansard of the year 1970, I think he will reconsider.

MR. SHERMAN: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm certainly prepared to do that. I can't guarantee I will do it over the noon hour but I'm certainly prepared to do it and I challenge the Minister to challenge me to do the same thing -- in the public debate, in the public forum there was a character assassination that was certainly equal to, and in my opinion far exceeded the kind of thing that the Member for Osborne has referred to, and it was directed against members of the private industry.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is not the point of order that was raised. The point of order was raised that the Honourable Member for Fort Gary said that an honourable member of this House -- either in this House or Committee -- referred to members of the automobile insurance industry as parasites.

The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. SHERMAN: I'm prepared to check the record, Mr. Chairman. If I can't find the reference which is firmly entrenched in the memories of members on this side I'll withdraw the charge, I'll withdraw the charge.

Mr. Chairman, the Member for Osborne also spoke in this House not long ago about a purported survey that he carried out which was entirely abandoned, of the insurance industry, on the question of automobile . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order. The Honourable Member for St. Matthews on a point of order.

MR. WALLY JOHANNSON (St. Matthews): I believe you asked the honourable member to withdraw his remark until he could check the records and he didn't do this.

MR. PAULLEY: I wonder if it would not be acceptable to the Honourable Member for St. Matthews to accept in good faith the remarks of the Honourable Member for Fort Garry who said he'd like an opportunity to check over over the lunch hour and he is prepared to withdraw the remark. I think that in fairness seeing as that we're at the hour of adjournment that we should accept the suggestion of the Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

A MEMBER: Over the lunch hour . . . ?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is correct, that is the understanding that I have from the Honourable Member for Fort Garry and I am accepting that statement that he has made.

The hour being 12:30, I'm leaving the Chair to return at 2:30 this afternoon.