

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, 16 March, 1981

Time — 8:00 p.m.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY — HEALTH

MR. CHAIRMAN, Morris McGregor (Virden): Item 4, page 76, I believe the Member for Fort Rouge was still questioning as committee rose. The Member for Fort Rouge.

MS. WESTBURY: Thank you, I had finished asking a question. I wonder if the Minister would like me to ask it again.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. SHERMAN: If the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge wants to get on the record again, Mr. Chairman, she can certainly ask it again, but I think I have the answer for the honourable member. She was inquiring about an apparent discrepancy in the number of clients served and serviced by the AFM as between the years 1975-76 and 1979-80 based on budget and complement, establishment of staff man years, and I think her question was why were there 6,000 clients in 1975-76 with a staff complement of 91 persons, whereas there were only 4,000 in 1979-80 with a 150 staff man years attributed to the AFM and its external agencies . . .

MS. WESTBURY: . . . And more money.

MR. SHERMAN: . . . And more money; \$3 million in 1975-76; \$4.5 million in 1979-80. The answer, Mr. Chairman, is that the figure for 1979-80 was not 4,000 clients, it was 9,641 and those were treatment cases, those were clients who received treatment and did not include a substantial of others served by the AFM in training and counselling and instructional programs. That number included 118 teachers, 1,159 employees, 1,000 professionals, and 1,000 citizens participating in information sessions. So the total number for 1979-80 was substantially more than the 9,641 I'm quoting, but that was the number who received treatment.

The 1975-76 figure, we're not able to verify, and I'm advised by the AFM officials that at that time requests for information and assessments of clients were counted as services and there were sometimes inaccurate statistics kept in this respect. There was considerable duplication and as a consequence there was a computerized system, a record keeping introduced a few years ago known as the Uniform Data System, the UDS, and that has enabled us to keep a firm and categorical fix on the number of clients treated, whereas that was not the case five and six years ago. So the 6,000 figure for 1975-76 is probably high in terms of actual clinical service, and the figure that the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge had for 1979-80 is very low. It does not compare by any means with the actual figure.

MS. WESTBURY: Last April the Minister gave an indication that the program, Building the Pieces Together, was being reviewed by an Educational

Advisory Committee with a view to integrating the best of it into an educational program in the high schools. Could the Minister now tell us if this review has been completed and if so, what conclusions have been reached regarding Building The Pieces Together and whether it will be reintroduced in Manitoba schools?

MR. SHERMAN: The review has been completed, Mr. Chairman. I wonder if I could have the indulgence of the committee to make a statement with respect to what we are doing at the AFM and through the AFM of at least a few brief minutes duration, because I think it's very important.

I am proud of and gratified by the things that are being done and the miles that have been covered by the AFM in the last three years, and I would like to place just a general overview on the record. I expect there may well be points of challenge and points of debate raised in particular by my friend the Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre, but nonetheless I know he has a keen interest in what the AFM is doing, and I would like, for the record, to outline a little bit of what they are doing, because under the leadership of the Chairman of the Board, Mr. Gary Miles and the board members, the Executive Director of the Foundation, Mr. Dave Cruickshank, and the Assistant Executive Director, Ross Ramsey, I think we've made considerable strides. We recognize that there are great challenges out there in this field and there's much to be done, but I think we've come some distance.

The past two years in particular, the Foundation has been going through a major reorganization and it's completed to the point where we're in a position through the AFM to embark this year into a number of new program areas and a number of new geographic areas.

The requested appropriation of \$6,128,400 in front of the committee, Mr. Chairman, contains funds to initiate a treatment program for youth which will combine individual counselling and group counselling with involvement from parents, schools, and community based self-help programs.

We have added alcohol treatment workers and basic treatment services and will be extending them into new communities — new in the sense that they haven't been served in this capacity before — such as Portage la Prairie and Swan River.

The Foundation has developed an initiative in the area of motor vehicle alcohol and drug programs and alcohol and drug abuse in three phases; new licencees, first impaired offences, and second impaired offences.

As I pointed out earlier this afternoon, Mr. Chairman, in 1981-82 the AFM assumes an operational direction of the former Alcare Resort Centre in Ste. Rose du Lac.

The Foundation has acquired the William Potoroka Memorial Library in its resources department, and the differences and the difficulties that existed between the Alcohol and Drug Education Service and the Alcoholism Foundation of Manitoba have been successfully resolved with a melding of those two important agencies.

The annual report, which was tabled in the House the other day, contains a good overview, I think, and

explanation of some of the things that have been identified and have been developed into program thrusts and initiatives by the Foundation for the coming year and for future years. I would just refer members of the committee to one or two references in that report. As the report points out, the Foundation treatment programs have been refined to meet client needs and the increased demand for service, and that has included the addition of new non-resident programs in Winnipeg, Dauphin and Thompson. The overall effect of that has been a considerable increase in our treatment capacity.

The creation of the position known as the Alcohol Treatment Worker is an important development. This official assists communities and clients in the intervention of alcoholism and provides long-term aftercare following treatment. Positions were established in Dauphin, Rosburn, Flin Flon and Gillam. We also have a regular weekly service by travelling Alcohol Treatment Workers, who offer extended service to a number of points in the north, including Nelson House, Wabowden, Ilford and Pikwitonei.

An important initiative is the Employee Assistance Program. That service has been expanded into the north with a position in Thompson working with mining companies in several locations, and a new position has been created in Winnipeg to offer increased program development services to industry in the south.

I have referred to the significant Driver's Program, which has been developed in the Winnipeg region. That is soon going to be expanded into other regions.

We have a special program at the Headingley Correctional Institute which was put in place late in 1979, and it continued through 1980 to provide very good results in terms of referrals to long-term rehabilitation on discharge.

The four AFM treatment centres are encouraging the development of alumni groups which serve to support new clients in treatment, as well as offering link-up and liaison with existing community resources in the search for long-term success and triumph over the illness.

1980 has been a year of extensive planning. Two committees have been formed, the Education Review Committee, and this is the one which has dealt with the subject raised by the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge, Building the Pieces Together, and the overall educational approach, and the second committee, the Medical Advisory Committee. Each has contributed substantially in planning and participation in the accomplishment of extending the awareness in the community of alcohol and drug abuse.

Plans and studies have been initiated into the area of treatment programs for youth and these are to be developed and put in place in 1981. Mr. Chairman, the AFM Youth Program is based on the principles of community mobilization. It calls for the provision of numerous treatment and prevention programs, each designed to assist professionals and lay people in treatment of chemically-dependent youth and provide citizens, at the same time, with the tools necessary to help work against chemical abuse and irresponsible use. The AFM is prepared to provide the direction, education and the training, but the

programs have to be part of the day-to-day life of the community. We intend to begin in the following places simultaneously: In the schools, with teachers, parents and youths working together; in the homes, with parenting skills programs; in the health and social assistance fields with nurses, policemen, social workers, probation officers, and the like, with special training for intervention and treatment support methods; in the judiciary, the lawyers and court officials, respecting intervention and referrals; in the church, with clergymen and youth leaders, again respecting intervention, referrals and support; and in the workplace, with management, with personnel officers and with union leaders.

The specific education program in the schools, which was formerly known as Building the Pieces Together has been under review, as the Member for Fort Rouge suggested a moment ago, by the Education Review Committee, and the recommendations have come forward that it be revised, and that revision is currently under way.

In the 1981-82 fiscal year, we believe we will have a strong educational program in place for use in the schools. It will be endorsed by the Educational Committee. That committee is drawn of lay and professional people from a cross-section of Manitoba, as well as by the staff of the AFM and the Board of Governors of the AFM.

The Alcohol and Drug Education Service Board has closed its doors and has amalgamated with the AFM and in concert with that the William Potoroka Library has become part of the AFM's resources. Three of the ADES Board members are sitting on the AFM Educational Advisory Committee. The ADES In-School Program is continuing and we'll be looking towards our Educational Advisory Committee for evaluations following a one-year trial.

I can't say too much about the Employee Assistance Program. That is one of the major thrusts of the AFM. We have worked particularly hard in the north to put this in place, initiating an Employee Assistance Program with the Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Company, and having proceeded thus far to very productive meetings with both Inco and with Sherritt-Gordon Mines, out of which have come EAP, Employee Assistance Program committees, who are working on development of their respective programs. An EAP Program at Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting in Flin Flon got under way late in the fall. We have been handling approximately 20 to 25 persons in that program. Thompson Hospital is working on such a policy and program, with training workshops to follow. Lynn Lake Hospital has developed a program which has been approved by the AFM Board, with workshops under way as of last month.

The AFM has worked with the New Careers Program of the Provincial Department of Labor and Manpower, to formulate a two-year Career Training Program for new alcohol and drug staff to work in the field of alcoholism and to provide work and development for seven persons.

These are some of the forward thrusts that have been taken and that will be in high gear, if I may use that term, in the coming year, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the committee's indulgence in permitting me to make some of those points for the record. I think it is important, because the people of Manitoba

and the Government of Manitoba, both the Government and the Opposition of Manitoba, are well-served by the Board, the administration and the staff of the Alcoholism Foundation, who are hard at work and creatively at work in an extremely challenging health field. There is no question that alcohol and drug abuse constitute, at least in relative terms, an epidemic in North American society.

I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge what the new administration and the new Board at the AFM have produced for Manitobans in the last two years in the way of new ideas and new approaches that are proven and that will deliver the results we need and that have been refined to the point where now they are in place and should produce measurable results for us in the immediate future. In fact, some measurable results are already evident, as I have indicated in some of my remarks.

Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Fort Rouge.

MS. WESTBURY: I think that was very interesting, Mr. Chairman, and will be looking forward to some of the results coming forward to us by the next Session, or before, if possible.

I do have another couple of questions on AFM and I would just like to proceed. I understand that AFM operates at least one program in conjunction with the Motor Vehicle Branch. Is that right?

MR. SHERMAN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, that's the Second Offender's Program.

MS. WESTBURY: I wonder if he could advise me whether they have joint use of information in the Uniform Data System. Concern has been expressed to me as to whether AFM clients give consent before data concerning them is provided to the Motor Vehicle Branch, whether in fact there is any breach of confidentiality here in the presentation of information to the Motor Vehicle Branch.

MR. SHERMAN: I would have to check with the AFM and with my officials on that question. I don't have the answer to that, Mr. Chairman, but I will obtain it for the honourable member.

MS. WESTBURY: Thank you. The last question has to do with the allocation of funds to other agencies, which I understand is now done through AFM. Since AFM is a treatment agency as well, I have been asked whether AFM then doesn't have a vested interest in maximizing its share of the funding, as opposed to funding external agencies. Do they have all of the control over where the funding goes for external agencies, is the first question?

MR. SHERMAN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, the AFM recommends to the Minister of Health the distribution, breakdown and dissemination of external agency funding. It is done in consultation, but certainly the opinion, perspective and viewpoint of the AFM weighs very heavily in terms of the element of ministerial or governmental decision on the amounts and the distribution of those amounts.

MS. WESTBURY: I'm just going to leave it at that, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. BOYCE: Earlier this afternoon, to the Minister through you, Mr. Chairman, in response to the Member for Fort Rouge you used the expression "social categories", in responding to the question about whether people had to say that they were alcoholics before they were eligible for admission, and you said that they weren't, which I understand is the case also, but in your answer you used the words "social categories". Could you expand on that just a little for me, what is a social category?

MR. SHERMAN: I think, as I recall, I'll have to check the record, Mr. Chairman, but if I used that term it was reference to the question from the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge about the differences in numbers of women who were on the clientele list of the AFM and its agencies and the numbers of men. I may have used it in that reference and if I did, what I meant by that is that, as I said at the time that I think traditional stereotypes and lifestyle patterns have tended to disguise and obscure the problem of alcoholism in the female population to a much greater extent than in the male population. That certainly is changing and is going to change more as more and more women enter the workforce, but traditionally we have looked, for example, at a situation where a male suffering from the disease is in the workforce and therefore his problem is obvious to a great many people every day. Many females have been in the home and not in the workforce and their problem has not been obvious, and as a consequence, it's either gone unrecognized or unadmitted and certain unattended to.

I would say that if I used the social category in that context it's because I am thinking in terms of persons in particular income groups, particular socioeconomic groups who don't work or who come from a generation in which women did not generally work as against those from other socioeconomic backgrounds and from today's generation, who do participate in the workforce very competitively. Some of those women who have more or less been preoccupied with life in the home have had drinking problems that have not surfaced as readily as is the case with the others and I think that explains part of the discrepancy in the figures, but it's no doubt going to change with new work patterns and new lifestyles.

MR. BOYCE: It was in a different context, as I recall it. Hansard will — perhaps we can discuss this some other time. When I get a Hansard I can show you. Where you used the phrase is why I've raised the question.

Mr. Chairman, I too would like to commend the Alcoholism Foundation of Manitoba and I'd like to go back to 1956, I wouldn't stop at 1977. I'd go back to 1956 when their budget was \$50,000.00. I'd like to commend all the people who have been associated with the Alcoholism Foundation for the 25 years that it has been in existence.

I was glad to see that some of the difficulties have been resolved and I'm glad to see that Bill Potoroka's name in this field has been put down in perpetuity in that sense that his library is now part of the Foundation, because he was of the ones of the people who was crying in wilderness with Al Christie

and a few other people way back when. But the problems which accrued from 1969 to 1977 perhaps are different than the problems that accrued from 1977 to 1981, and while there may be some political advantage in enunciating some of these differences and the problems which come to my attention, because there's probably no other field in government that I get more phone calls or correspondence than in this particular field, but the Minister is a politician, I am but a man of the people so I won't speak political.

I'm glad also to see that Alcare has been resolved. The only thing I would like the Minister, perhaps he could get it from staff and give it to me later, the figure on it, I'm not even going to question, because that was a difficult situation. If we had our druthers, I think anyone would rather the place was built somewhere else, but nevertheless there were other things that had to be taken into consideration.

As far as the question raised relative to the Annual Report and the difference between the fiscal and calendar year, I would suggest to the government that they maintain that particular position, because the only advantage it may have is to some of the private agencies and I see that there may be an advantage to them. But as alluded to by the question from the Member for Fort Rouge, when she questions the amount of money that is being spent directly by the Foundation vis-a-vis that which is spent by non-government agencies, is always a problem. Now you'll get people that think because they make a request for funds that that is the amount that is forthcoming, and former administrations back to 1956 have held by and large that the moneys allocated in this field is under the aegis of the Board of Governors of the Foundations, albeit that it is in consultation with the Ministers and there may be priorities that have to be addressed.

My problem is not with the Alcoholism Foundation, it's with the government and in looking at the Annual Report for 1980 and the people who comprise the Board of Governors of the Alcoholism Foundation, it reflects in my view a cross-section of very capable, competent and interested people in the field. So I'm not going to sit and second guess what they need. I was involved with the Alcoholism Foundation, had I still been there, I may have done things differently. I may have painted the Board Room blue or maybe something of more significance, but nevertheless I don't think it is the position of the Opposition to harangue over some things which may be just the difference in administrative policy.

Nevertheless, I do take exception with the government's position vis-a-vis the Foundation, because on paper it looks like you're going from \$4.9 million roughly to \$6.1 million, but the overall philosophy of the government is being reflected by the Board in that here you're adding an additional service and moving on in a costly direction in my opinion. Because the overall thrust of the Alcoholism Foundation, in many peoples' opinion, is that the only way that it can make a significant social impact is if it starts pulling people out of other treatment modalities.

Now I know that you'll get arguments on the efficacy of this model or that model, treatment, pattern, system, programs, procedures and all the rest of it. Nevertheless, if we go back briefly, Mr.

Chairman, prior to LeDain's interest in alcohol and drug abuse, there was precious little interest in the field of alcoholism by some of the more traditional professions, but after it became evident that there was going to be public moneys put into this particular field, the interests which was brought to bear and everybody wanting their slices of the pie professionally, has caused a problem and this is another manifestation of the government's inability to make decisions when it puts them in conflict with powerful groups within our society.

This is the third manifestation of such unwillingness to come to grips with the problem. We had it in psychiatric care for children; we had it in Dentacare and here is another field. Now the Annual Report is presented in a form which is hard for anyone to really read it meaningfully. If you look on page 7, The Annual Report of the Alcoholism Foundation for 1980, you will see Item No. 2, Hospitals and Physicians, Individuals admitted to hospitals for alcohol and drug programs 1,551; Individuals seen by physicians for alcohol and drug programs 5,211. If you look back at No. 1, you will see Total Admissions to Detox Facilities 4,288; Total Caseloads of Residents and Non-Resident Treatment Programs 5,000. So you have roughly 9,000, well roughly 10,000, 9,700, to 6.7 thousand people. I will hazard a guess at this point in the game that this will shift even more, because as the moneys are made available, those people who have sophisticated outreach programs, outreach programs in the sense that they go after funding for their particular approach to any problem are usually more successful than those people that aren't that sophisticated.

In my view, the unwillingness of the government to develop a pull, a pressure on that system, so people are diverted out of it, out of the medical model, and, Mr. Chairman, I am the first to confess that you need all of them; you need the psychiatrist; you need a psychologist; you need doctors and you need everything else. You need as many modalities as we can possibly afford, because there is some truth in the adage of different folks, different strokes. But nevertheless this report reflects a skewing of the funds made available to one particular model. It, I repeat, reflects an attitude of the government. I don't fault the Board of Governors because they have to make decisions as agencies of the Crown and they reflect the policy of governments. Albeit some people hold different views, nevertheless that is the fact of the matter.

So I would encourage the Minister in consultation with the Board to encourage them to develop programs which will put pressure on the traditional systems, where we have individuals admitted to hospitals for alcohol and drug programs, that the Chemical Withdrawal Unit and the Alcohol Treatment Unit, these modalities we doubtless have to have.

So, Mr. Chairman, without going through the question of whether X dollars go here or X dollars go there, I'm just giving the Minister the benefit of my thinking on this, and he may disagree with me entirely, but I would suggest, Mr. Chairman, that since this is, as I recall, the first Act was passed in 1956 — perhaps Dr. Johnson could refresh my memory — I think it was 1956 that The Alcoholism Foundation Act was first passed and if such be the case, perhaps this is the year that there should be a

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gathering of the clan, if you will, of all the people who are still around in the province, and there's a goodly number of them who are still around. There are not too many of the original Board of Directors who are with us. In fact, I don't know if there are or not, but nevertheless, it would perhaps be a good year to do an assessment of where we have gone.

To sum up my ramblings — I'll admit that this is just an overview of it because I don't think it does anybody any good for me to reflect some of the phone calls or letters I get to the specifics, because regardless of who sits in that chair, you are going to have to same kind of criticisms; it's too much of this modality, not enough of that modality, you give me the money and I'll do a better job than those other people that you're giving the money to. You are always going to get those kinds of arguments.

The administration of it, I think, and I'm glad to see most of the senior staff are still there. I still owe, and I'll put it on the record, to go from a few hundred thousand dollars to over a million dollars, I think the province owes a debt of gratitude to the people who did that, Brigadier-General Graham and Mr. Puchlik. I was glad to see him go from Finance to take charge of the till, because it was a big task and I think errors were made. I will be the first one to admit that, but nevertheless, in the public interest, Mr. Chairman, I think the Minister has to accept the responsibility, if what I believe is happening does occur, that it is going off in a direction which will put more emphasis on one modality than they should on several smaller modalities.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, Henry J. Einarson: Resolution 4. pass — the Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: I see that one of the thrusts of the Foundation will be youths, and the Minister indicated that and it stated that in the report. It says on Page 4 that youth will be a major demographic thrust.

I looked through the report and I tried to recall what the Minister said and I don't think he spent much time, if any time — I couldn't recall any anyway — talking about the problems that retired people run into with respect to alcoholism or a growing dependence on alcohol. These are people who are busy; they are working; their day is, in a sense, taken up with activity; they retire and they have a lot of free time on their hands. They don't really know how to fill it all and one easy way of doing so is to start off by getting slightly inebriated and then they progress from there. I am wondering whether in fact the Minister is taking this into account, because when one talks about demographic thrusts, surely that is one that is upon us. We have more people living longer; there are an increasing number of people over 65, in possibly better health at 65 than they were a few years ago, on average, possibly with a lot of energy and not enough to take up their time and it's a matter of working with older people and getting them to pursue alternative ways of taking up their time and finding some utility from their life at that age, rather than resorting to the bottle.

I am wondering if there are any statistics kept on the growing incidence of alcoholism amongst people over 65. The Minister says that this is an epidemic and I agree. I know that we have particular problems amongst youth, but at the same time, I think we are overlooking the problems that older people have.

MR. SHERMAN: I would agree with the Honourable Member for Transcona, Mr. Chairman, that certainly that is a category, an age group or social category that certainly is deserving of equal attention and the AFM has turned to that area to try to evaluate the extent of the problem, if there is a problem. It is also a subject that we'll be asking the Council on Aging to look at. Up to this point in time, through the Community Mobilization Program of the AFM, a vast number of seminars, workshops, instructional sessions and in-service training sessions have been held with teachers, counsellors, community workers and agency personnel, many of whom are involved in activities having to do with the elderly population and senior citizens. So the message in terms of addressing the "problem" if, as, and to what extent it exists in the elderly population, is certainly being delivered through the Community Mobilization Program and has been carried to persons who interface with that elderly population. In addition to that, the Foundation is working directly with the Age and Opportunity Centre on the basis of a \$20,000 Federal grant to develop a program that will train counsellors and alcohol treatment workers for work in the senior community.

So the problem is being addressed, but certainly there has been more focus, at least in terms of publicity and attention and controversy, on the problem among the younger population because of the acknowledged magnitude of the problem in schools and particularly in junior high schools.

MR. PARASIUK: I don't want the Minister to misinterpret me; I am not criticizing the focus on youth. I think that at the same time, there should be more substantive attention given to problems that elderly people might have. I do so by saying that I think that we don't have any statistics on this indicating whether in fact alcoholism is increasing amongst elderly people, and I would think that those are the type of statistics that if we have all these facilities for treating alcoholism, that we in fact should be keeping that type of statistic to see whether in fact the problem is changing. I do so noting that on page 12, and I don't know what this relates to, but on page 12 of the AFM's Annual Report it says that, "Budget restraints curtailed the breadth of former evaluation and research activities in 1980." I don't know whether that relates to anything in particular or relates to the general activities of the Alcoholism Foundation of Manitoba, because if that's the case, then again that type of restraint, I think, was shortsighted and we pay the consequences now.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: 4. pass — The Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. BOYCE: The Member for Transcona points out a relationship, and when I said earlier I didn't want to criticize the Board or the Foundation, I forgot to make the point that with the economic conditions as they are, all negative social indices increase as a direct result. That's almost fact. It's more in the realm of fact than Darwin's theory; that as unemployment goes up, suicides go up and crime goes up and divorce goes up and alcoholism goes up. When people have nothing to do, the first thing that they do is start anesthetizing themselves, it's a

well known fact. So it was in that context that I fault the government, not the Alcoholism Foundation, because it's a direct result of government policy in the economic field. They are creating these problems which he says are epidemic. If it's going to increase at this rate, then I don't know where the end of it is going to be, and it's funny, it's passing strange, Mr. Chairman, that the government has always adopted the policy that you couldn't solve problems by throwing dollars at them, but I have yet to hear of the netting out any social cost.

Earlier today we were talking about unemployment in the north; better to have welfare than make employment programs, or put employment programs into place, and the final line social cost of economic policies, the tools haven't been devised, I will admit, but they're not even making an attempt to see what the final social cost is of some of these problems. I think it comes to mind of the community in the north which has been in the news lately because of vandalism and everything else, and that's just one particular community. It's almost endemic to society as a whole as a result of the whole economic thrust of the government, and it is because of that I fault the government and not the Alcoholism Foundation.

MR. CHAIRMAN, Morris McGregor: 4. pass — the Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: Could we get a report on the problem that existed last year and the year before and presumably still exists in Winnipeg with respect to glue sniffing and the sniffing of solvents? Is the Alcoholism Foundation of Manitoba looking into this matter? I know it required some work on the part of parents involved with students in the center of the city in terms of trying to get the city to enforce a by-law against the easy sale of glue and solvents that were in fact being sniffed by young children. Can we get a report on this particular problem?

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I'm advised that the three Prairie Provinces, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta are working together through a joint committee to try to evaluate the extent of the problem and methods for getting at it.

One of the sort of elusive facts in the mix is the permanence of the glue sniffing addiction. Apparently research has indicated that it will flare up in certain localities or certain neighbourhoods or certain sites for a period of time, a matter of a few weeks, and then dissipate and disappear, and then there may be an occurrence of it in a different locality. The three provinces are working together to try to measure the extent of the problem and develop techniques for attacking it and getting it under control.

Just while I have the floor, Mr. Chairman, I would like to, if I could, for the information of the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge, who had asked about female clientele, just to refer to the AFM facility on River Avenue, River House, which is now known as the Women's River Avenue Centre, and which is devoted exclusively to female residential and non-residential treatment programs. The increase for women in terms of program admissions over the period October 1979 to September 1980, has been greater than that for men on the AFM rolls, and it's interesting to note that over that period of time, October 1979 to September 1980, there were 3,344

admissions to the Women's River Avenue Centre, which is the first residential house for women alcoholics in Canada, to our knowledge. The existence of a residential facility where women with the problem can go, and with some degree of compassion, understanding and confidentiality receive treatment, is uncovering that iceberg of which we have only seen the tip in previous years.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 4. pass — The Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: Yes, I was looking again at the Annual Report, Statement of Revenue of Expenditure for the year ended March 31st, 1980. It says Revenue, Province of Manitoba grants, \$4,603,000.00. That doesn't quite correspond to what's printed in the Estimates book, and furthermore it says Other Revenue of \$77,348.00. Can we get some explanation of that particular discrepancy and also some indication of where this other revenue comes from?

MR. SHERMAN (Fort Garry): Mr. Chairman, the \$77,000 of Other Revenue is made of various tax rebates and donations that are received by the AFM. The \$4.6 million does not include the General Salary Increase and adjustments of that nature to the actual AFM 1980 appropriation; they're not included in that \$4.6 million.

MR. PARASIUK: It's not included, I know but you see, the item that was in for 1980 was \$4,536,000 which is a difference of about \$65,000.00. Now if you added the salary increase then you would have some figure in the order of \$4,800,000 possibly or maybe \$4,900,000, and yet what's printed in the book is actually having been spent for that year, according to this Estimates book was \$4,536,000, and, if there was any particular reason for that discrepancy, I . . .

MR. SHERMAN: The column in the Annual Report, Mr. Chairman, refers to fiscal year 1979-80. The figure in the Estimates that the honourable member is looking at is fiscal year 1980-81.

MR. PARASIUK: The figure I was taking was from the green book, Estimates of Expenditure and Revenue for 1980-81 and this shows final figures and it's for the year ending March 31st, 1980 and the figure I've got in here in the green book was \$4,536,000 and . . .

MR. SHERMAN: For 79-80?

MR. PARASIUK: Yes, the year ending March 31st, 1980 and if you look at the Annual Report it says the year ended March 31st, 1980, both being the same, a difference of about \$150,000.00.

MR. SHERMAN: Well, Mr. Chairman, then I think we have to go back to point number one, because the figure that's printed in the Annual Report here for Fiscal 79-80 of \$4,680,448 would include the vote that the honourable member is looking at plus the balance of the GSI for that year, plus any supplementary spending, any supplementary Estimates. So that in the final reckoning on the financial statements of the Foundation it now

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appears as \$4,680,448 for that year. Does that explain it?

MR. PARASIUK: Probably, I just thought that, this is probably the first time in the last week that I've been picky. I thought that one picky point deserves to be raised in the Estimates process. I'll let it pass. That's sufficient . . .

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I'd find it a lot easier to debate the honourable member's philosophical points than his picky points.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, Arnold Brown (Rhineland): 4. the Member for Fort Rouge.

MS. WESTBURY: The Minister just answered one of my previous questions, Mr. Chairperson. I believe he said caseload of 3,000 and something women were accepted at River House what used to be called River House in the last year; could he tell me what the average length of stay would be for those women and how many at any one time River House can accommodate?

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, if the figure of 3,444 admissions is for the Womens River House Centre since it was launched as a residential and non-residential treatment centre for women, and that spans more than a year . . . Mr. Chairman, if you'll just give me a minute.

I don't know if I can give the honourable member that figure, Mr. Chairman, I'm trying to see whether I can. But what we're talking about in terms of River House is a period of existence of some twelve years in which it had been a treatment centre for both women and men, and in 1979 it became exclusively a residential house for women alcoholics. Over the course of the past year I am advised that the clientele numbered about 235 women at River House.

MS. WESTBURY: When the Minister says residential, he means people are sleeping there, living there, right?

MR. SHERMAN: Right.

MS. WESTBURY: So, how many at any one time can be in-residence at River House at any one time?

MR. SHERMAN: There are 14 beds in River House, Mr. Chairman, and the treatment of course lasts for 21 days, so every 21 days, those 14 beds can turn over.

MS. WESTBURY: Thank you. Would the Minister give us a breakdown for the year 1980 of the grants that were made to private agencies through the Alcoholism Foundation?

MR. SHERMAN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, the grants for 1980-81 for external agencies, for the Churchill Health Centre, \$29,400; for Fort Alexander, \$35,500; for Kia Zan, \$112,200; for the Main Street Project, \$395,500; for the Native Alcoholism Council, \$107,900; for the Salvation Army, \$127,800; for The Pas Health Complex, \$296,800; for X-Kalay, \$106,800; and the Alcare Resource Centre was in

our package last year, as the honourable member knows, and the figure for the Alcare Resource Centre last year, am I correct in saying it was \$176,700? For Alcare, it was \$176,700 last year; this year Alcare is part of the AFM operation.

The amounts that I have just provided to the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge are the 1980-81 grants and in all cases they are increased this year, or the request in my Estimates is that they be increased this year. For the Churchill Health Centre, I am asking the committee for \$45,000; for Fort Alexander, \$36,100; for Kia Zan, \$123,000; for the Main Street Project, \$485,100; for the Native Alcoholism Council, \$118,900; for the Salvation Army, \$139,800; for The Pas Health Complex, \$391,800; and for X-Kalay, \$118,600.00. We are absorbing Alcare and it will cost us, we project, about \$215,000 out of the direct Foundation budget, to operate it.

MR. CHAIRMAN, Morris McGregor: 4. pass.

Be it resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$6,128,400 for Health — pass.
5. the Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: I wonder if we could follow the . . . adopted in the last few years, that is, to go to Administration, then Pharmacare, Ambulance, Northern Patient Ambulance Program, and then go back to Personal Care Homes, Hospitals, and the Medicare Program, the three largest ones.

MR. CHAIRMAN: To the Member for St. Boniface, maybe if you would repeat the suggestion.

MR. DESJARDINS: I was suggesting that we go along, as we did last year, have the Administration and then go to the fifth line, Pharmacare, and keep the Personal Care Homes, Hospital and Medical Programs, until the end.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, before we do that, for the benefit of the committee and the press, could I take two minutes and announce the 1981-82 Manitoba Health Services Commission Capital Program approved by government for planning and construction?

The program, Mr. Chairman, calls for a capital borrowing authority of \$34,650,000, which is in addition to the \$200 million worth of capital health facility construction that has been approved and is under way, either in planning or construction, as of 1978. The total annual impact on the budget of the Manitoba Health Services Commission, when the facilities approved for construction in the 1981-82 list are open and operating, will be \$8.011 million.

The items, Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to say, include the replacement of the old 34-bed wing at the Fairview Personal Care Home in Brandon. The reason why the column on bed changes shows a reduction of 16 beds is because there are two very old hostel residences operated by the Salvation Army in Brandon, Bulloch Booth and Eventide. Bulloch Booth contains 24 beds, Eventide contains 42; for a total of 66. They will be replaced by a new 50-bed personal care home which creates the reduction overall of beds in the amount of 16 beds but that is a project that the Salvation Army has embarked upon, so we don't include that in the

MHSC capital borrowing authority. The capital borrowing authority shown, the \$2 million, is for the replacement of the older wing at Fairview.

There is \$1.7 million committed, Mr. Chairman, to a new 20-bed personal care in Glenboro, to replace the old so-called Glenboro Senior Citizen's Home, which functions as a personal care home; \$3.2 million to replace Resthaven in Steinbach with an 80-bed personal care home; \$1.6 million to replace the Menno Home in Grunthal with a 40-bed personal care home; \$1.5 million to replace the Arborg Hospital. Gladstone will experience an upgrading of its hospital. I have put a question mark beside the \$1.4 million. That expenditure has been approved by Cabinet and I would certainly seek the approval of the committee and the House to expend that amount, if necessary, but it should not be construed as necessarily the final amount. The final amount may be substantially less than that. There is still some disagreement as to the extent of the upgrading work to be done, but that would be the ultimate, if one side of the discussion prevailed over the other.

There will be a new 20-bed psychiatric rehabilitation facility built at the Grace Hospital; a new personal care home juxtaposed to the hospital in Manitou plus renovations to that hospital, it'll be a 20-bed personal care home; \$2,250,000 to replace the Mount Carmel Clinic with a new building; \$6 million in total for Phase I of redevelopment of the St. Boniface Hospital, and this first phase includes the acquisition and establishment of a linear accelerator and a CAT scanner. As members of the committee know there is a CAT scanner at the Health Sciences Centre, but it's heavily worked, overworked one might say, and this will provide Manitoba with a second CAT scanner. So we'll have one CAT scanner for every half million people, which is a reasonable ratio. There's certainly some North American jurisdictions which have more than that, but there's a great many that have less than that, and one for every half million is considered a reasonable ratio. \$1.5 million to expand and renovate the Emergency Department in the Physio and Occupational Therapy Units at the Victoria Hospital. We are proceeding with the R.H. Institute Project and intend to ensure that Manitoba through the R.H. Institute shares equally in the high technology industry of blood fractionation, the fractionation of blood plasma, which will continue to be gathered and collected by the Red Cross and continued to be a voluntary system and continue to be non-profit.

Finally, Sir, \$3 million contingency, which is maintenance and upgrading, and \$1.5 million for fire safety upgrading, for the total borrowing authority commitment of \$34,650,000.00.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think the Chairman needs a little guidance at this moment. Are we going line-by-line under the suggestion by the Member for St. Boniface?

The Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, that has already been agreed, but I think that maybe at this time without comments on this, I think the Minister would allow questions for clarification purposes at this time and then later on we will talk about personal care homes, because I have a few such questions to ask, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Line 1, Administration.

MR. DESJARDINS: No, before we start that, just on the Capital Projects, the planning and construction, the Minister has agreed to answer questions for clarification at this time, not policies or anything like that, that will be taken when we go line-by-line.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to know what is the total amount that we approved last year for this program and what has been spent so far. That is one of the questions I . . .

MR. SHERMAN: Just a minute, Mr. Chairman, I think I can probably answer that. Overall, Mr. Chairman, we're looking at some \$200 million in capital construction approved by the government since 1978. I think if I can just have one minute I can give the honourable member the breakdown on that.

MR. DESJARDINS: While he's looking for that, Mr. Chairman, what I'm driving at is to have — you know, we approved that at the start of the year, has there been any changes? What has been spent of the approval and is there any repetition here of last year's approval? And that is the total cost I think that we have in front of us, that will not be all spent this year. Am I right? Do you have the date, the estimated year of completion? And also is that in this year, this present-time dollars at this time? It might have to increase, right? You can't tell the future.

MR. SHERMAN: That's right, Mr. Chairman, that's in 1981-82 dollars and the list is new. There is nothing in this list that has been previously approved. These are all new items.

Mr. Chairman, I think I can, if the Member for St. Boniface can bear with me to a degree, I think I can give him the answers to his questions. (Interjection)— I know, but what I'm trying to get is the individual . . .

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, the thing that we used to do it and I think it was helpful, we had the total amount when we announced a program and then we had in different years what would be spent.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I can probably give it to the member if he'll just bear with me while I try to transpose figures. The Member for St. Boniface is asking for the 1980-81 program.

MR. DESJARDINS: That's right, 1980-81 program. But you know, we can have that tomorrow.

MR. SHERMAN: The 1980-81 program project-by-project?

MR. DESJARDINS: Not necessarily. Mr. Chairman, if I can have the attention of the Minister, I think that what we used to do and I think it was helpful and I'd like to have that, when we had an approval like this we have the total estimated cost and if it was to be completed in three years, we had approximately the amount every year. That was a good guideline and I'd like to have this for this new one, because some of them will not be finished until 1984 and I would

like to know from last year — you know, I don't remember the amount. Two years ago was \$50 million was it, or was it last year? — what has been spent of that a year and how it's going, a kind of a progressive report. It's okay to approve these things, but there's a lot of money involved and it seems the least we can ask, and maybe we should serve notice on the Minister now instead of making it more difficult for him at this time, if he can be ready for that when we deal with personal care homes then and hospitals; have a progressive report of what we have approved for him over the last few years, until one is finished and then we're finished with this one and then give us an estimate also of how this will be broken down, what will be done this year and then the following year, until the date of completion. It's an estimate, we understand that something can happen and it's not possible to follow it to the letter but it gives us a better idea, I think, and if there has been any changes; is everything going that we approved last year, or was something cancelled for some reason or other or delayed or frozen or whatever.

MR. SHERMAN: I can certainly do that for the honourable member, Mr. Chairman. I can give him the whole total right now of the number of projects that are under way; it's just that I don't want to mix years.

For example, projects that are under way right now such as phase one redevelopment of the Health Sciences Centre which is \$75.6 million, I have listed in the 1980-81 capital program list and I just want to make sure that I am giving him 1979-80 and 1980-81 properly separated, but I have in front of me a progress report on every project that has been approved by this government since 1977-78; how far along they are . . .

MR. DESJARDINS: Could we ask the Minister to give us a copy of that for our next meeting; all of it?

MR. SHERMAN: Yes, I can do that, but it would be a little difficult tonight to try to transpose.

MR. DESJARDINS: That's right, it would be better if we had something in front of us and then we could look at the announcement of the previous years and we'll see where it's at; that's all we want.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: I would just like to make a brief comment on the overall picture given us by the Minister in terms of the capital projects which I think probably don't relate to any particular line because they are capital, but the Minister has given them to us and given them to the press and I think they warrant a brief comment.

In looking at this list, it's almost as if the Minister has responded to past crises highlighted by us or the press. I look at Brandon Fairview which was raised repeatedly by my colleague, the Member for Brandon East, in response to the Fire Commissioner's reports, other reports. Finally after raising it, I'm glad there's some movement there. Steinbach and Grunthal were probably raised more so by the Winnipeg Tribune when they were following the Cabinet on what turned out to be a somewhat disastrous tour by them of the

southeast when they ran into Mr. Dyck and other people complaining that nothing had been done with respect to these non-profit homes. In Manitou, I don't know, that one possibly isn't in response to any major crises that I heard, but I know that Victoria Hospital, last year the head of the hospital was complaining about the problems there at Victoria.

So I see a number of responses to crises. I'm glad they have finally come about, but I don't know whether in fact this is what I would call part of any type of systematic plan that might have been established over the past years. Another addition, I think, that has occurred because of public pressure and the tremendous outburst of outrage at the comments directed against the Mount Carmel Clinic last year by one of the government members, I think in response to that public outrage, the government has come through with a commitment, again a commitment they should have made earlier with respect to Mount Carmel Clinic. Again, we welcome those types of responses; we're sorry they hadn't been made sooner. If you look at the net additions in personal care home beds, we're really talking only about a net addition of 21, which overall, I believe, is probably insufficient; certainly insufficient given the backlog that exists and given the fact that a number of non-profit community religious and service groups have indeed applied and are waiting to proceed with the construction of much needed personal care homes. From what we have been able to discern there are at least 1,000 people on waiting lists, waiting to get into these personal care homes and a net addition of 21 is a pretty paltry addition to say the least.

However, to give the government its due, I must say that we are extremely pleased that it would appear that those personal care homes that have received approval this year are indeed non-profit personal care homes. I am glad the Minister seems to be conceding in his actions that his policy with respect to private corporations being involved in the provision of personal care through personal care homes is indeed mistaken. I am glad that this year the Minister is proceeding in a way that I think takes into account the tremendous services being provided in the whole area of personal home care by non-profit groups. In that respect, although it's only an addition of 21, and that addition of 21, I'm glad that the Minister has recognized our position with respect to non-profit personal care homes. We feel that position is consistent with the position taken by the government with respect to the RH Institute and I hope that the Minister will continue on this line that we in fact have advocated for some time now and which we believe is the right way in which to provide needed personal home care.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Fort Rouge.

MS. WESTBURY: I wonder if the Minister could tell us how much of this project cost, if any, is Federal Government money; particularly, I thought the RH Blood Fractionation was Federal money — no, none of it?

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, there is no Federal money as such involved in any of these projects. Certainly the budget of the Manitoba Health Services

Commission is met through a global amount of money that the Minister of Health, whoever she or he may be is able to extract from his colleagues and Treasury Board and Finance and Cabinet and it pays for the capital debt repayment amortization and operating costs of all these projects; all those that are existing and all those coming into existence and that is a mix of provincial and federal money, but there is no direct Federal funding applied to any of these projects.

Mr. Chairman, I would just like to respond briefly to the Member for Transcona. I appreciate his remarks, but I want to say that I have been on record for the past year as stating that the emphasis in personal care construction in the coming year was going to have to be on the replacement of some old time-expired personal care homes in Westman and other parts of the province. This is a start on that plan. There are more to be done and they will have to be addressed in next year's program, but I can assure him that one of the reasons why I was dismayed by the publicity that he refers to is that the the board members and the officials at the homes concerned were fully aware that we had these projects down as major priorities for the coming year but we hadn't been able to announce them officially obviously because the government simply can't do that on an ad hoc basis throughout the year except in the case of absolute emergencies.

I just want to disabuse him of the impression he may have that it was a response to some publicity at that time. We have in the past three years authorized and approved for construction a total of 841 personal care beds of which some one-half or slightly more will come on stream in 1981 and the other half will be opened by 1982, so that the figure for personal care bed additions in this program, although it may look minimal at 21 beds, is not a fair reflection of what has been happening in the personal care field. We have been building and are building new personal care beds. What we are doing here is replacing old personal care beds and it doesn't add up to very much in the way of an increase in numbers to be sure.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Seven Oaks.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, the Minister may not have this information but I will ask it now, he can get it later. Mount Carmel Clinic which is neither a hospital nor a personal care home replacement of the existing clinic building, firstly is it on the site that was picked for them in 1977 — is that the site where it's going to be, and secondly, how is this going to be paid for? They're not on a per diem in the sense of a personal care home which is on a bed per diem or a hospital for that matter, so how is this going to be financed? Is it going to be the MHSC that builds the building and retires the debt? I'm curious.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, the site is the one that was selected several years ago. Insofar as the capital debt repayment, the amortization of the capital debt is done in the same way as in the case of other health facilities but there is a slight difference in that they don't operate on the per diem basis that some other health facilities do, but we through Mount Carmel, make the capital debt repayments based on the amortization of that debt over a 25- or 30- or 35-year mortgage.

MR. MILLER: So I'm assuming then it's somewhat similar to the way the Finance Board, the public schools Finance board, retires a debt on a school building. Their annual grants include the amount necessary for that year's retirement.

MR. SHERMAN: Yes.

MR. MILLER: Okay. Is Mount Carmel Clinic going to be required to put up a certain amount of this in the way of up front capital?

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I'm advised that the answer is yes. Mount Carmel is putting up some money over and above the capital commitment being made here in this program of \$2.25 million. They have indicated that they wish some additional configuration to that which would be provided by this \$2.25 million and they are prepared to put up the additional. I can't tell the honourable member exactly what it is.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, the Minister is announcing his construction program now. Last year there was a certain policy announced on the proprietary nursing home and of course that wouldn't be shown here. If anything, could the Minister report on that? I think there was something in Selkirk and so on. Could we get something on that with the other material that the Minister has promised us also?

MR. SHERMAN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I can report on part of that right now. The personal care home in Selkirk which is Red River Place, which will be 104 beds, replacing the former 72-bed personal care home is scheduled to open on August 1st of this year; August 1st, 1981. That's private, that's proprietary. There are five proprietary homes in the overall package. Up until today there were 22 Personal Care Homes under construction in one phase or another; in some cases it was final design and in most cases it's actual physical construction. 17 of them non-proprietary and 5 of them proprietary. That number now, of course, increases with the personal care homes replacements that are announced in this Capital Program, but the 5 Proprietary ones are . . .

MR. DESJARDINS: There is no increase in proprietary?

MR. SHERMAN: No, no increase in proprietary. The 5 proprietary ones include 3 in Winnipeg, 1 in Portage, and the 1 in Selkirk, which is Red River Place.

MR. DESJARDINS: Can the Minister give us the same information on all of them as he did on the Selkirk one?

MR. SHERMAN: Yes, the 3 in Winnipeg are: The Maples, which is being built in West Kildonan, and is 200 beds and is due to open on September 1st of this year.

MR. DESJARDINS: That's replacing how many beds? Is that a brand new one?

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MR. SHERMAN: Well, I can give him the total. That is a combination of some proprietary beds that were in place before and had been closed down or phased down in the program of the winter of 1977-78.

MR. DESJARDINS: How many of those beds did they have; in other words, when this is all finished how many new beds will it give us?

MR. SHERMAN: In total, the proprietary program that's under way will produce 120 more proprietary beds than were in existence before.

MR. DESJARDINS: You can't give us that for each one of them, like you did for Selkirk?

MR. SHERMAN: Well, I can pretty well, pretty well if I work through the list. Let me try it this way.

When we addressed the problem in the winter of '77-'78, we were looking at 302 proprietary beds. We closed 194 of them at that time, and there's still 108 of those to be closed. That was the total of 302. Then to that was added the Selkirk Nursing Home, which was 72 beds, so that made a total of 374 proprietary beds being replaced. When these 5 proprietary homes are opened and operating, the 3 in Winnipeg, the 1 in Selkirk and the 1 in Portage, they combined add up to 494 proprietary beds as against 374 in the old configuration, so it's a net increase of 120 proprietary beds.

The Maples is 200 beds, due to open on September 1st, in West Kildonan, September 1st, 1981; Selkirk we've dealt with; Vista Park Place is another of the proprietary operators who were phased down or closed down. They will open on January 1st, 1982 - 100 beds.; in Portage, which was the Holiday Retreat, it was 50 beds at the time we phased it down to 25 and those 25 patients were transferred into the Lions Manor in Portage. That remaining 25-bed facility is to be replaced by a new 50-bed facility, which is scheduled to open on April 1st, 1982.

The other one, Mr. Chairman, is the Golden Door, which was to be a 40-bed extension of the Golden Door on Pembina Highway in Winnipeg, due to open on April 1st, 1982. It was to replace the Nightingale Nursing Home here in the Roslyn Road-Fort Rouge area of Winnipeg. That accounts for the 494 as against the 374, I believe.

MR. DESJARDINS: We've got the 494, and that's quite helpful. We have the projected date of opening, that's fine. Now, if we can get those 302 that were close. We already have 72 out of the 374 in Selkirk. If we can get the approximate 302, the 194 that were closed and the 108. If we could relate it to this, then my record would be complete on this.

MR. SHERMAN: The 194, I think we can identify, the 194 were homes in the Roslyn Road-Fort Rouge area of Winnipeg plus the 25 that I've referred to at Portage. If that 194 that were closed in the winter of '77-'78, they included homes like the Thorvaldson Nursing Home.

MR. DESJARDINS: Alright if you want to go by owners then, which one is Thorvaldson of the 5 here?

MR. SHERMAN: He's not operating individually in the field, Mr. Chairman. His beds have been

allocated in the 200 allotment that has gone to The Maples, that was a combination of several proprietary owners.

MR. DESJARDINS: How many did we close in those same proprietary then? —(Interjection)— Not only Thorvaldson but all those that are replaced by Maples.

MR. SHERMAN: Probably about 169, Mr. Chairman. The closures that are coming up, the 180 closures that are coming up are 72 in Selkirk, and of the other 108, 20 are the Nightingale here in Winnipeg that's being closed and is scheduled to be replaced by that 40-bed extension on the Golden Door; 25 are the remaining 25 at the Holiday Retreat in Portage, which are to be closed down and replaced by the new 50-bed home in Portage; and the other 63 are combined between the Curran, Arcadia and Mayfair Nursing Homes in Winnipeg, again in that central Fort Rouge-Roslyn Road area of the city. The Curran; The Arcadia and the Mayfair, they add up to 63, and that's the 180 that still have to be closed against the 194 that have been closed.

MR. DESJARDINS: Now we're getting somewhere and now we just need the 194.

MR. SHERMAN: The 194, 25 of them would have been in Portage and of that 169, I'll have to check my records, Mr. Chairman, some of them I've forgotten their names. They were homes like the Curran, Arcadia, Mayfair, Thorvaldson, Nightingale, that group, but I've just forgotten their names.

MR. DESJARDINS: The remaining 169 then, right? 194 minus 25, so that leaves 169 would be replaced, would be the owners who are now building the 200 in Maples, the 100 in St. Vital; so between those 3, the 169 would come out of those 300?

MR. SHERMAN: That's right.

MR. DESJARDINS: 169 plus 63 that are going to close now?

MR. SHERMAN: That's right.

MR. DESJARDINS: So that's 232 of those? Okay.

MR. SHERMAN: That's right. They combined, some of the operators left the field and others combined, because many of those older homes as the honourable member knows were very small and they were actually operating in old residences, old family homes and today it just is not viable . . .

MR. DESJARDINS: So, am I right in believing that this is what happened, that when they were closed they were in the department, the government then agreed to give them a replacement for that and it was only those people, they received a replacement for every one that was closed plus an additional 120, but there are no new owners, they might have formed a partnership instead of an individual thing, but there are no new owners that received anything, but they did receive 120 more, that were closed and will be closed when this is all finished, right?

MR. SHERMAN: That's correct, Mr. Chairman.

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MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Fort Rouge.

MS. WESTBURY: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I just have a couple of questions relative to this Capital Construction Program. In the Speech from the Throne we were told that we would be asked to consider long-term development plans for the Selkirk and Brandon Mental Health Centres and other measures to provide additional psychiatric care beds. Well, I see the new 20-bed Psychiatric Rehabilitation Facility at Grace Psychiatry, so perhaps that's the one referred to there. What about the long-term development plans for Brandon and Selkirk Mental Health Centre. Are we going to see anything in these Estimates?

MR. SHERMAN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, they're under the Government Services Program. They're provincial buildings and provision for the first phase regeneration of both of them is included in the Estimates of the Government Services Department.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: Are we now on 5. Administration?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I hadn't called the line-by-line. We're generalizing prior to . . .

MR. PARASIUK: I was waiting for that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Administration — the Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: I think we should get a report from the Minister on the whole status of the Manitoba Health Services Commission. Last year if you can recall, in Estimates the Minister indicated that there was some doubt as to whether in fact there was any validity in having the Manitoba Health Services Commission continue to exist in its present form; that there seemed to be some logic in folding the Manitoba Health Services Commission into the Department of Health. He said that last year in the Estimates process, he indicated that last year when he was asked questions by Justice Hall and Justice Hall's assistant. I'm wondering if the Minister can indicate what the plans of the Government are in this connection?

MR. SHERMAN: Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't foresee any change in the status of the Manitoba Health Service Commission. Certainly there's been serious consideration given to folding it into or absorbing it into the Department of Health as a division of the Department of Health. I've discussed it with my colleagues and the other Health Ministers across the country, most of whom have gone through the experience; many of whom regret it, if I may say so.

There certainly have been opinions expressed in the past that have favoured consideration of that kind of a move. My experience is that it is preferable to have the Commission operate as a separate free-standing Commission and that's the way I would intend to continue to operate as long as I am Minister, Mr. Chairman.

MR. PARASIUK: The Minister is quite clear then. He said he has reviewed the situation; last year he said

he was reviewing it and it was up in the air. This year he said that definitely he would not be folding it into the department; that's fair enough.

Then I think it leads on to the other question though, that still was outstanding at that time. One of the reasons the Minister indicated for not appointing a permanent Deputy Minister of Health is that he said there was this confusion or there was this uncertainty as to whether in fact, given the new structure of the department, the split of the Department of Health from that of Community Services, whether in fact many of the functions that would be performed by a Deputy Minister of Health wouldn't in fact be performed in one way or another by the Manitoba Health Services Commission. Well, the Minister has removed that uncertainty; therefore I think it is appropriate to ask, does that mean that the Government is going to act and act clearly in terms of establishing the appropriate managerial function for the Health Department on a full-time permanent basis as opposed to doing so on an acting basis? Furthermore, when the Minister was talking about the different roles of the Manitoba Health Services Commission and that of the Department of Health, he indicated that a great deal of planning for Health would in fact be done by the Manitoba Health Services Commission. In fact, I wasn't quite sure whether he wasn't saying that all of the planning for Health would be done by the Manitoba Health Services Commission.

Again, I look at the overall Estimates and I don't really see any overall planning function being called for in these Estimates. The Minister, having removed uncertainty with respect to whether in fact the Health Services Commission would be folded in, I think he should clarify that function as well. Is there then going to be an overall planning function? Who will it be done by? Who can we ask, in reviewing these Estimates, who can we look at? Which appropriation should we look at to determine whether in fact this job is being done adequately or inadequately?

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, if I ever at any time gave the impression to the honourable member that overall planning would be handled by the Commission, then I apologize for poor communication because that is certainly not the intention.

The Commission does function on an ongoing and continuing basis in the area of operational planning. In the area of planning and construction of facilities, for example, day-to-day operational planning obligations and responsibilities, but long-term planning is not seen, not envisaged by the government as a function exclusively of the Manitoba Health Services Commission.

Part of our problem, I think, on the public health side in Manitoba, and I think it's true in many other jurisdictions, has been that there has developed, over the past 10 to 20 years, an intense preoccupation with some of the more high profile, perhaps even more glamorous programs in the health field that have come under the universal insurance programs of Medicare and Hospitalization and personal care and like organizations. As a consequence, there has been a problem in maintaining both the morale and the authority and the interest of the public health side of the department. We are making intensive efforts to

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strengthen, reinforce and revive that public health role and that public health status. We are looking for professional medical expertise to recruit into public health and we are looking for arrangements with Community Services that will give our medical officers of health and our professional medical experts the kind of role and the kind of authority that is rewarding and gratifying and that encourages doctors, nurses and other professional medical personnel to serve in the public health field.

Long-term planning is concerned with that function of health in addition to many other problems and challenges in the health field. We are setting up a long-term planning component, or a long-term planning branch that will serve as a link between the public health side of the department and the Commission. We intend to involve the Commission much more deeply in the problems and the challenges of public health and to involve public health in awareness of the problems and challenges of the Commission. That was one reason for thinking of folding the Commission into the department in the first place. We think we can accomplish that by this other method, maintain the Commission separately but providing that link or conduit which will take the form of a long-term planning component, to which there will be input from the Commission and from the public health side and from the outside, outside expertise on which we want to call. So the Commission will participate in long-term planning but with no greater profile or no greater status than will the public health side.

Insofar as the question of the Deputy Minister is concerned, the feeling at the time we were giving consideration to folding the Commission in was that most of the administration really falls under the aegis of the Commission's operation, whether it is a separate operation or part of a departmental operation and therefore the question of a permanent Deputy Minister was perhaps not as urgent and the resolution of it was perhaps not as urgent at that time as some may have thought.

Having made the decision to keep the Commission where it is and to establish this long-term planning link and liaison capacity between the two operations, we are addressing the question of a permanent Deputy Minister. I am perfectly happy with my Acting Deputy Minister, Dr. Johnson, and I have no hesitation in saying so. When one comes to consider the appointment of a permanent Deputy Minister, you have to take into consideration the feelings of the individual himself or herself, as well as the desires of the department, and that simply hasn't been resolved yet. It has not impeded the operation of the department in any way but I would agree that, in general terms, certainly as a principle and as a practice from an ongoing point of view and from the point of view of the future, that we do want to clear up that uncertainty and we will be clearing up that uncertainty as quickly as we can this year.

MR. PARASIUK: I just want to add a footnote to the Minister's last statement, that I think it is difficult establishing a long-range planning function and establishing this link with the Manitoba Health Services Commission, recruiting people, if you don't attempt to put in place a permanent Deputy Minister. Ministers tend to come and go a bit more quickly than deputies do and I would think that at the

management level, the Deputy will play a critical role in putting together capable people in the health care area. It is difficult getting the proper technical people. I think there have been some advancements in the last while in this respect. In the past it struck me that people tended to argue that it's a necessary condition of being a good health care planner that one be a doctor. That, in fact, isn't necessarily true. There are schools developing of health care administration where I think, in some respects, they have been able to show very clearly that there are matters of allocation required, allocation of resources to different aspects of health care that may in fact not have been questions that haven't really been provided for in the training that doctors receive, a whole area of health care management, health care administration.

So I think it's important to develop this long-term thrust and I say that I think the uncertainty has created uncertainty throughout the department and has led to a situation where I don't think there is any long-range planning. I know that was the thrust of the predecessors of the present Minister of Health and therefore I say that has been unfortunate and I hope it is cleared up as quickly as possible.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Fort Rouge.

MS. WESTBURY: Yes, I'm not going to take very long on this line, Mr. Chairman, but I wanted to ask about the recommendations and comments in the Spivak Task Force Report. The Task Force commented that the relationships among the Manitoba Health Services Commission, the Department, and the health care institutions are unsatisfactory at present. He said, "the Commission's role has been weakened in recent years as a result of direct approaches to the Minister by professional groups, boards of the health institutions and the communities. This may be inevitable in the light of the magnitude of MHSC budgets and their impact on government revenues."

In their recommendations, they say that the MHSC, to the extent that many matters are bypassing the Commission, is not fulfilling the role originally conceived for it. I'm sure that the Minister is aware of the rest of the recommendation.

They were talking about moving towards a departmental structure, which the Minister has just sort of shot down. What I really want to ask, and I'm not even suggesting that is the answer either, but I'm asking if the position of the Commission has been strengthened in view of the comments and the observations that were made in the Spivak Task Force Report, so that there will be more clear-cut delineations between the department and the Commission and the Minister's office. Is the Minister satisfied that these different institutions have been strengthened and their positions clear-cut, in view of these comments?

MR. SHERMAN: I think, Mr. Chairman, that there was certainly some truth in the recommendation findings and recommendations of the Task Force and the conclusions that they reached at that time. That was one reason why the government which was elected in 1977 and appointed that Task Force, looked very hard at the whole question of folding the Commission in.

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We have made some changes however, and the most significant and meaningful one, really, was dividing the role of the chairman and the chief executive officer. The Executive Director of the Commission, as you know, is Mr. Reg Edwards, on my left, and the Chairman of the Commission Board, is Mr. Gordon Pollock. That was a deliberate move that paralleled the moves that were made in the Manitoba Telephone System, Manitoba Hydro and Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation and I think that although changes of that kind are always difficult for everybody, I think it has worked out very positively and that some of the rationale for some of the things that the Spivak Task Force recommended no longer exists.

In this day and age I think, and I'm sure the Member for Seven Oaks and the Member for St. Boniface would agree with me, it's impossible for a Minister of Health to escape the pressures of boards and advocacy groups, but I think that it's kept to a minimum by the Commission and the way the Commission operates and the procedures which Mr. Edwards carries out in service to the Commission and to the Minister and the procedures which the board carries out. I think it's minimized as much as it can be, but over and above that, I just want to suggest that I think there's another argument for keeping the Commission where it is. The Commission has essentially got a good reputation. Certainly people can always find things to criticize about anything and the Task Force had some criticisms but essentially it has a very good reputation and it's not regarded really, either as a political football or is it put in the position of being a political football.

The Minister, whoever he may be, from whatever government is in office, takes the questions and the criticisms and the comments in the House and outside the House, as he should do on matters relating to health care and the Commission is spared a good deal of that difficulty and I think it's a good thing that it is, because it would exhaust a great deal of effort and energy on the Commission's part, in its officers and its administrators and its personnel, if it had to defend itself as subjects of direct political debate. I think that's one very strong advantage to having a separate Commission. But I don't think it's a clear-cut or easy question to answer either way. I can understand why some provinces have abolished their Commissions. There is certainly a strong sentiment on the part of some politicians that you get better financial control if the Commission has to go through Treasury Board, the same as all the rest of us do, rather than being its own banker or its own administrator of its own funds. I get an argument from Mr. Edwards on that, I know, but there's is certainly politicians who feel very strongly that way.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Fort Rouge.

MS. WESTBURY: Just one more short question relating to the Spival Task Force. There was a recommendation that perhaps a council on health should be established similar to that in Ontario. I know that you've been very busy with the Council on Aging and I don't expect two councils in one year, but has that idea been totally abandoned or was it ever seriously considered?

MR. SHERMAN: It's certainly been seriously considered in probably a slightly different format. In

fact when we were looking at the absorption of the Commission, we were addressing at that time the future use of those personnel who constitute the Commission board and we were considering using the Commission board as the basis or the nucleus of a council of health or an advisory council to which would be added some representation from other fields and disciplines, so it was given consideration in that context.

At the present time I think we would look at the long-term planning component as a reasonable substitute for that council on health. It would be designed to draw on the resources in the community in whatever field or discipline relative to our health issues and health problems might arise, as we want it to draw and recruit and second, so it would be an advisory council in that sense. That's as far as we've gone with the concept, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to comment on the last subject that was brought up. I agree with the Minister one hundred percent. I wouldn't lose too much sleep or too much time in trying to determine if we should abandon, if we should do away with the Commission. I don't think it would be wise; I think it serves a purpose.

But I disagree with the Minister and he's the one that brought it up, that's the only reason why I wanted to respond. The Minister stated that the most meaningful thing that was done under the administration was to separate the Chairman of the Commission and the Chief Administrator, or whatever the title is. And the comparisons that he made, I don't think are valid, and I don't agree with that and I think that if we went back in office I think we'd probably go back to the old system and I want to tell the Minister why.

It was fine when the Commission generated revenue of their own and that's why I say the comparisons are not good, because the Liquor Commission and the Telephone have their own revenue and they are very much left alone in many ways. The government will spell out certain policies and then they will be left alone. Mind you they will have to come and ask the government if there's an increase in rates, if they need more money for something and that could be refused, but then they will work within their budget, with the money that they have and if they want something new or something more, if they want to expand, they have to get the permission to increase the rates, but once that is done they run their own affairs and that's the way it should be.

Well, the Commission will never be totally independent. It is impossible in this new — the government more and more, as they accept certain responsibility will have to accept, I mean, as they go forward in that field, for instance of ensuring personal care homes, which is rather new and more of these things, and if it's an ensured program or a universal program, then the government decides. And I think that the Commission certainly has a role, for instance, if the Minister and the government decides that there's going to be so many dollars spent for new beds, I think then the politicians should get the hell out and let the, in general, and let the Commission decide where so then it would keep

this element of partisanship out of it and it would be where the need be and then it would make it easier for the politician and the Minister, also for all the pressure, well we need personal care home, we need this, and I can assure the Minister that this is what we did. And I think that the Minister in general did pretty well the same thing, because what was frozen out of our program that we had announced, our five-year program, I think they're all in there. Some of them were modified with times and I'm sure that was a recommendation of the Commission. There's only one, one glaring exception. It was the one that was replaced and then all of a sudden out of the clear blue skies came the one in Enns' constituency, but we covered that last year; I don't intend to bring that out again. And I think it could be very difficult because if the Commission is free to go ahead and make all kinds of policies and statements, then the Minister will say, hey, just a minute, you know, you're coming to us, we're responsible for everything and that is one of the reasons why we are spending time in the Commission.

I remember when I started in this House and for many, well in fact, I think it was not until I became the Minister, that we said here, we're going to take this or maybe in the time of Mr. Miller, that we said we're going to look at it line by line, that we insist, because we felt we had that responsibility. And I remember the total amount was quite a large sum in those days when Pickering was the Chairman and so on, and that was passed with no question. That was, you know, decided at the Commission, but in those days, as I say they generate their own revenue in the premiums and that has been abolished. You know, it's no use, we can pretend, we're not fooling anybody. We can pretend that the Commission is deciding but we're not doing that, so that the reason why the Chief Executive Director was made the Chairman at the time, because he was always in contact with the Minister. He give the leadership to the Commission, but within the guidelines and the direction of government. I don't mean by that the government crossed every "t" and dotted every "i". As I say they came in, if we said we're well, okay, they came out and they said, well we need so many beds, we went along with that and they had the expertise there. And yes, the Minister is right, they've got a very good name and it's a very good Commission; second to none. And the Minister is right in stating that some of the other provinces now are sorry that they went that far.

So I go along with the Minister in everything and he might not consider that important, although he did say that was the most important thing that they did and I think it is a natural for the Chairman, and especially we had a policy committee in that day and if the Minister is saying that there's going to something else that the Commission is going to plan, but not alone with the rest of the Commission, that existed. We had a planning committee where the Commission came in and was a member of the Advisory and Planning Committee. So, you know, I'm not damning the Minister for that, it was the Fairview, that they should separate that, but we went upon records saying that we don't agree with them and if we had changed we would probably marry the two again. I think that it would be everything aboveboard and the Chairman would give the

leadership to the Commission, would be independent in many ways but then he would go along and develop these things and give guidance to the rest of the commissioner, staying within the boundaries of what the government want, because it is very very easy also to get carried away and decide on their own and it should be done by the government because the taxpayers are paying the full shot now, not with premiums, but with tax dollars. And it is up to, not the Commission, the Commission can make a recommendation, it can still do it now. It doesn't matter if the Chairman is a person who's on there every day. I think is more useful then somebody who is going to come in once or twice a month for meetings. So I think it's, even when they're discussing with doctors, we're not going to pretend that it's all left in the hands of the Commission. The Commission starts the ball rolling, does the work, but eventually the money has to be approved, first by the Minister and then by the Cabinet. And I think the present Minister accepted those responsibilities the same as I did and my colleague also, so that is one of the reasons that I feel that it worked very well before, if the Minister is satisfied that it is working well now, sobeit, but I don't think that was an improvement in anything at all.

Mr. Chairman, I think that we agree that we would finish this line of administration. The revenue will come in and they go directly to the hospital, like for instance, the third party of the personal care home and in the hospital, the people that have been panelled as personal care homes so we'll have a chance to cover that. But before we finish that, I would like the Minister if he could go through, I've got the last Annual Report and I'd like to write in there the administrative expenses and I'd like to know percentage-wise, how much are they spending, because I think that we had a enviable record in those days. We had one of the best and I hope that we're maintaining that. And I'm talking about, I've got page 48 now in the annual report — (Interjection)— Well, I've got this one, they're the same, I think this was the initial one and this is the final one, is it? Reg, this is the final one? Okay, on Page 48 on this one, I wonder if the Minister could go slowly so we can write it down, we have 1980, and the expense of running the administrative schedule.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, the breakdown of the administrative costs are as follows: Bank charges, what we're budgeting for 1981-82 as against what was voted in 1979-80 — that's what the honourable member wanted — 1981-82, \$92,000; 1980-81 was \$79,000.00.

MR. DESJARDINS: \$92,000, I don't know, but 1980, that I have here is \$61,000.00.

MR. SHERMAN: That would have been 1979-80.

MR. DESJARDINS: Well the last one that we had that finished in March 1980. That's the last one we have.

MR. SHERMAN: What I am looking at is 1980-81, so I'll have to get the 1979-80 ones.

MR. DESJARDINS: Your year is the same, it ends up in March, now. The last one I have for 1980 . .

MR. SHERMAN: Here's what I'm looking at, and that is not the way it's laid out in the Annual Report.

MR. DESJARDINS: This is the new one, this is what you are asking for now, that's the \$10,289,000.00.

MR. SHERMAN: But it shows 1980-81, and then it shows what we are asking in 1981-82.

MR. DESJARDINS: Okay, yes, that's what I wanted.

MR. SHERMAN: Is that all right?

MR. DESJARDINS: What's the big difference, the increase in bank charge of \$13,000.00?

MR. SHERMAN: It's substantial. That's the interest rates, of course. Another large increase is reflected in employer contributions; a large increase is reflected in postage and express.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I can also see the large increase, but what for, that's what I want to know from the Minister. I can read. What is the 66 for, the large increase? Just a word or two of . . .

MR. SHERMAN: Under employer contributions?

MR. DESJARDINS: Right.

MR. SHERMAN: Largely as a result of rate increases in Unemployment Insurance and Canada Pension Plan contributions.

MR. DESJARDINS: You are locked into that anyway. You can't do anything about it.

MR. SHERMAN: No.

MR. DESJARDINS: \$45,000, postage and express, \$45,000 more. That seems to be a large one, that's a lot of stamps.

MR. SHERMAN: Postage is up \$40,000. Just a minute, there's \$50,000 in there for publicity and public relations programs, which have not been undertaken, but you will recall that the Council on Aging suggested to us that one of the things that is very much in need in terms of the requirements of the elderly, is better information on the programs that are available and so we have provided \$50,000 for publicity programs, but have not developed anything yet to account for the spending. We haven't developed any informational program that we can attribute to that yet, but the amount is in there so that we may do so.

MR. DESJARDINS: Well that's a good idea in an election year.

MR. SHERMAN: The additional to that is the increase in postage.

MR. DESJARDINS: That's a lot of stamps.

MR. SHERMAN: It's a lot of stamps, but it's a big increase that . . .

MR. DESJARDINS: Professional Consultant, I don't know if it's that big an increase, \$29,000.00.

MR. SHERMAN: Those are the quantity surveyors, are they not; quantity surveyors and medical assessors, the Dental Review Committee, the Standing Committee on Medical Manpower, the Provincial Auditor, the Pharmacare Review Committee.

MR. DESJARDINS: Salaries — there's been an increase now in the pay of what? That's for the commissioners isn't it? What are they paid now? What's the Chairman paid?

MR. SHERMAN: The Chairman receives \$7,100, and . . .

MR. DESJARDINS: From what?

MR. SHERMAN: The Chairman receives \$7,100 in 1980-81. What we have done is approved an increase in remuneration for the Chairman, which will take that up from \$7,100 to \$16,600.00.

MR. DESJARDINS: Holy God, how come? That's not a full time — of course it would be too low for a full time Chairman, but . . .

MR. SHERMAN: Because the time that the Chairman gives to the responsibilities of his job and to the issues that the Commission deals with and advises the Minister on, justifies that kind of an increase in our view.

MR. DESJARDINS: The other members?

MR. SHERMAN: The other members receive \$5,700.00. The Deputy Minister who is the Vice-Chairman of the Commission receives no remuneration.

MR. DESJARDINS: You mean the Acting Deputy? From what, what is the increase to the member?

MR. SHERMAN: It hasn't increased. The member is still . . .

MR. DESJARDINS: It's just the Chairman?

MR. SHERMAN: It's just the Chairman who increased.

MR. DESJARDINS: Just a minute, I have an increase here of \$988 — those are thousands of dollars right?

MR. SHERMAN: That's on the original page that I gave you. That's the total salaries.

MR. DESJARDINS: Oh, that's the salary for the Commissioners and the staff.

MR. SHERMAN: That's the total Commission's staff salary.

MR. DESJARDINS: Okay, fine.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Administration — pass.

MR. SHERMAN: Committee rise?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Committee rise.

**SUPPLY — CONSUMER AND CORPORATE
AFFAIRS AND ENVIRONMENT**

MR. CHAIRMAN, Abe Kovnats (Radisson): This committee will come to order. I would direct the honourable members' attention to Page 33 of the Main Estimates, Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Environment.

Resolution No. 40, Clause 5. Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation — the Honourable Member for Burrows.

MR. BEN HANUSCHAK: Mr. Chairman, just a minute or two before four-thirty this afternoon, I had wanted to ask the Honourable Minister to comment on his second mortgage operation, which is shown in the report as the Homeowner's Assistance Program, offering second mortgages of \$3,000 to \$5,000 for the purchase of property in the Meadows West Subdivision.

Now, it appears, Mr. Chairman, that for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1980, the program wasn't all that successful because — yes, as of March 31, 1980, the total second mortgage loans allocated were in the amount of \$12,800, representing three homeowners. Could the Minister bring us up-to-date — I'm sure that he probably can't up until today or yesterday, but could he give us the most recent figures for the current fiscal year that would give us some indication as to what success or failure he has had with this program?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

HON. GARY FILMON (River Heights): Mr. Chairman, I am advised that the program only applies to the Meadows West Subdivision, that only 16 lots have been sold and that we only have the three mortgages that are indicated in the last annual report.

MR. HANUSCHAK: So is the Minister saying that there were no further applicants subsequent to these three?

MR. FILMON: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. HANUSCHAK: Does MHRC have any funds appropriated for a Homeowner's Assistance Program for the forthcoming fiscal year?

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, the funds come out of the profits from the sale of lots in Meadows West and we haven't had a requirement for any more.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (a) — pass — the Honourable Member for Wellington.

MR. BRIAN CORRIN: Mr. Chairman, I want to go back to a matter that we were discussing in the afternoon, and for that matter, Mr. Chairman, one that we have been discussing in a variety of different contexts throughout this session, even last year's session. That is the question of the Shelter Allowances for Elderly Renters. I am wondering if the Minister can advise us why so few renters seem to be availing themselves of this particular program?

I am concerned about this, Mr. Chairman, because it has been presented in the House as an alternative

to rent controls, as an alternative to public housing for the elderly; it is described in a variety of different complexions, a variety of different manners. Yet, Mr. Chairman, the report indicates that the subscription levels are very very low. As a matter of fact, I was just thumbing through the report. I made some notes and it seems to me that since January of 1980, and I think that was when the first statistics were tabled in the House — that was under the former Minister — we have only had an increase of roughly, I would say about 800. I think the figures are, the former Minister, still the Minister of Economic Development, indicated in the House in January of 1980 that the program was being utilized by 1,506 elderly renters. The report talks about 2,302. Now, perhaps the report was not as detailed as it might have been. Maybe the report was referring to old data.

I suppose to be in all fairness, can the Minister advise what number of people are actually subscribing to the SAFER Program itself as of this month, 1981, because it's possible that there has been a very affirmative trend since the statistics were last dealt with as evidenced in the report? Can he tell us precisely what sort of numbers we are talking about?

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, I am advised that the take-up is approximately at the same rate as what was experienced in B.C., which is the first province that introduced this type of program; that it took them two full years to achieve 50 percent of the potential take-up in the program and that we after one year have reached somewhere between 25 and 30 percent, so we appear to be on schedule with that type of take-up. It could be that more advertising is required, it could be that other ways of making it known are necessary and we're certainly taking a look at that, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CORRIN: Well, I'm heartened to hear that the government is looking at ways of popularizing or at least communicating to the public the availability of this program. As I've said on several occasions in the past, I'm not one who is diametrically opposed to the Shelter Allowance concept and approach. I think it has some validity, it's worked very well in the Scandinavian countries, where it was originally conceived. It's a traditional program in Britain, where it has operated under both Labour and Conservative Governments for a long time. But, Mr. Chairman, I think although the Minister indicates that he feels the problem lies perhaps in public relations or advertising, I would think rather he should look at the numbers. I think his problem, if the government has a problem, is in the bookkeeping.

This has been, of course, alleged on a number of occasions by members on this side and for that matter, I think last Friday this was a matter raised, I suppose as a matter of conscience, by a government backbencher. I presume it was the Shelter Allowance and how it worked on senior citizens tax credit exemptions that motivated him to publicly disclose his interest in reforming certain tax policies that confronted senior citizens.

In any event, Mr. Chairman, I think it's safe to say that we have a rather anomalous situation, which I suppose arose only as a result, I presume it's nothing intentional, I suppose it results from some bureaucratic inefficiencies, some mismanagement on

the part of government planners. But we have a contradiction in the assistance offered to seniors through the SAFER program and the assistance offered through our Property Tax Credit deductions. You know we have a situation where people's property tax credits are deducted from their SAFER allowances, so the net effect, Mr. Chairman, is such that, or I should say the allowances deducted from the Property Tax Credit, excuse me, so we have in effect a situation where a lot of senior citizens have absolutely nothing to gain from the Shelter Allowance Program. So well intentioned as it may be, because of this sort of taxation, catch-22, many senior citizens have determined that it is not in their best interests to pick up on the program benefits. It simply leaves them nowhere.

There was, I thought, some excellent examples of the effect of the sort of contradictory effect of the Shelter Allowance and Property Tax Programs in a Letter to the Editor. This gentleman by the way was also on the Peter Warren Show last week and was giving even more explicit detail on this and I suppose when the government talks about advertising, they're now going to have a bit of an uphill problem and a bit more difficulty, because they're going to have to work against a bias, which is now growing in the senior citizen community, as a result of information such as this Letter to the Editor, the presentation made on the Warren show and the information, of course, disseminated by the Member for St. Matthews.

I think that the only rational solution is truly to reform the necessary programs, in order that they compliment each other and don't contradict each other. It's a question of just getting various departments' act together and making sure government is administered efficient.

I was saying that this gentleman in writing his Letter to the Editor detailed two senior citizens tax returns that he'd assisted to prepare and in one case a person with net income of \$5,288, he found that the SAFER allowance resulted in a total gain of \$4.26. You know, I suppose barely worth walking down and doing whatever you have to do to apply and become eligible for the benefit.

The other one, Mr. Chairman, he worked out on a net income of \$3,604 and after taking Cost of Living Allowances and the new formula that's been devised for that and we'll talk about that, I suppose, under Finance Estimates, Mr. Chairman, I think properly, taking that into consideration and the Property Tax Credit and the 1981 SAFER Allowance that the individual had received, this person after having the allowance deducted from the tax credit, gained absolutely nothing from SAFER. It was a total waste of the person's time.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I guess news travels fast. You know, if you're one of those who were honestly misled into the program, and you fill out your tax return for 1980, and senior citizens as we all know usually probably do this before most of the other citizenry because they've usually got a little more time to do that, you tell your friends, you're bound to spread the word that this isn't really worth their effort and they would best not be associated with it. I can appreciate this, because I remember we had the same problem with our Property Tax Relief Program, which was administered by MHRG. I think it's

probably still on the books somewhere, but I don't think anybody's picking up on it anymore, it's certainly not being publicized. But, you know, we had the same problem. Once the program was perceived in a negative way, once the word spread among the seniors' community that it was essentially a futile sort of government exercise, there was just simply no draw on the program allotment.

Mr. Chairman, what alarms me is that first of all the government still seems to be very very optimistic about this program's potential and I haven't yet heard them tell us whether they're going to work out the problems with the Tax Credit. I think during the Question Period today we had an indication that they were considering this. Certainly I guess it wasn't explicit to the credit but certainly, I guess, general reference was made to these sorts of problems.

I would like to know during these Estimates whether we can expect in this year any sort of relief that might assist seniors who have been receiving the benefit. I suppose there are 2,300 people who are wondering whether they have wasted their time completely.

Can I ask the Government Minister whether or not we can expect some sort of relief for these people?

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, the member is mixing apples and oranges a little. The comments of the Member for St. Matthews were not directed to the SAFER Program benefits. SAFER Program benefits, as the member may be aware, were based somewhat on the experience of the BC program in which they had had a prior run at Shelter Allowances. Our government's intention was to target SAFER benefits at low income people whose rent represented a very high proportion of their costs of living, and in fact we were aware of people in low income areas who were paying as high as 60 percent for their rental. The SAFER program was designed to correct that, or at least to ameliorate that problem. As well, the SAFER Program would have resulted in most people getting 40 percent beyond the Property Tax Credit as additional funds through this whole program, but a number of things happened.

Firstly, retroactively the government made a decision to increase the Property Tax Credits by \$100 after the SAFER benefit levels and all of the material had been computerized and put into the program. In addition to that, as I mentioned earlier today, the minimum incomes of senior citizens went from something under \$4,000 to something over \$5,000 in one year, so that the whole net effect of this resulted in people not getting as much benefits as was originally intended within the first year of the plan. We have already moved to rectify that matter by substantially improving SAFER benefits during the second year of the program. As a for instance, I can give you certain examples that indicate what the benefits would be to SAFER recipients under these circumstances. A senior citizen renter with a monthly income of \$345.00 and a rent of \$195.00 would receive approximately \$81.00 a month, which would work out to be substantially more than they would be allowed under the Property Tax Credit. That was in 1980.

Under the new improved 1981 SAFER Program, a single senior citizen renter with a monthly income of \$390.00 and a rent of \$230.00 would be receiving approximately \$119.00 a month. The SAFER benefit

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averages for singles were increased from \$43.00 a month to \$76.00 a month as a result of the enhancement that has taken place in the program. For couples, the average is increased from \$16.00 a month to \$63.00 a month.

As well, I can tell you that looking at what is happening currently, and we are now up to some 2,773 people receiving SAFER benefits. The averages indicate that 87 percent of the singles are getting more than the current maximum Property Tax Credit of \$525 and 79 percent of the couples are getting more than the current maximum Property Tax Credit of \$525 annually.

So there has been a very substantial improvement. We are working towards that and the effects have already been seen as a result of the moves that have been taken place, because we became aware of the effects of this as a result of all these other programs coming into force; the doubling, for instance, of the Manitoba Supplement for Pensioners, the increase in the OAS, the GIS, and the increase of \$100 retroactively on the Property Tax Credit, which resulted in some of the confusion and perhaps some of the disappointment that the member is expressing. But I can say that at all times, both through the former Minister's statements in this House and the folders which were included with all the information that was sent out on SAFER and indeed the SAFER information — in order to receive an application, one has to receive the folder that has the statement in it about the Property Tax Credit being subtracted, so at no time was it a question that the government didn't make that information available, but because of all these increases in income and circumstances, which were all beneficial to the individuals who were receiving these benefits, in the final analysis, fewer people than we had hoped for ended up benefiting by the SAFER Program.

MR. CORRIN: I would like to express my commendation for the Minister for being so candid, Mr. Chairman, and I suppose one has to confess that was a very honest confrontation of a very difficult issue, and I think he should be commended for making the admissions that he has relative to the deficiencies in the program and for his rather affirmative attitude towards cleaning up the program and making it work better. I think that is really to his credit.

In all fairness, I say, Mr. Chairman, it is something that he has inherited; it is not something of his own making.

Mr. Chairman, talking about SAFER, and I appreciate we are only talking about a relatively small constellation of eligible users or people who have applied and made themselves eligible, I am wondering whether the government is monitoring rent levels to ensure that adequate units exist within all rent ranges, or I should say all income ranges. Is there any attempt on the part of the government to assure that there is affordable housing available to people at this rather low income level? I know that the Minister has to confer with his departmental colleagues, so I won't ask too many questions while he is doing so, Mr. Chairman.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, we are monitoring the rents twice annually to coincide with the vacancy surveys that are being done in the city; they are

done in October and April, the monitoring process. The maximum benefits allowable are pegged at achieving 100 percent of the levels that seniors would have to pay in the inner city and two-thirds of that level in the rest of the city. So we are always attempting to gear our programs for affordability to the rental market that is out there and we are monitoring twice annually to ensure that we do target it at that level.

MR. CORRIN: I apologize to the Minister, through you, Mr. Chairman, but I suppose I am a bit thick but I didn't quite understand how that worked. Perhaps if the Minister could be a bit more explicit and perhaps use an example or whatever, just to make the situation a bit more obvious. I found the response just a touch abstract; I couldn't relate to it.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, for instance, in the recent October survey, the average rent levels for all inner city units was found to be \$229, with bachelor units averaging out at \$174, one-bedroom units at \$222.00. The maximum allowable levels that we have set for benefits under our Shelter Allowance Programs was \$240 a month for singles, which takes into account those levels. That means that it is beyond the average cost for those types of units that singles would normally occupy, being bachelor and one-bedroom, and \$270 for couples, faced with the average level for two-bedroom units of \$276.00. So we are keeping the benefit levels adjusted to reflect the rental costs of those units that are available. This is for the inner city. The maximum claimable rents under the program are set at those levels.

MR. CORRIN: I thank the Minister; I understand that, Mr. Chairman. That is clear enough.

Since, Mr. Chairman, we have now moved away from the rent stabilization approach to the rent control problem and have substituted, as a means of protecting low-income tenants, this particular approach, I am wondering what the government has done to assure that low-income recipients are not being excessively charged by landlords for units that qualify their tenant for this sort of assistance. How is the government protecting itself and the tenant from being exploited by usurious landlords? I am just wondering; I am not suggesting that there would be too many landlords who would want to exploit the old and the poor, but I think we can all agree that even if there were one, it would be one too many, and we would like to know that the program was doing something to protect the less sophisticated renter from this sort of unscrupulous predatory landlord.

Has the government taken any measures, and I know that this was not the case when the program was introduced and this is why I am asking the question, Mr. Chairman, we dealt with this last year as well — Has the government taken any measures to protect such tenants from unscrupulously high rent levels?

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, we are closely watching the rent levels and the changes that are taking place in the rental market. I can report from the information I have received that only 20 percent of the tenants currently on SAFER have received rent increases as a result of the decontrol process and

those increases averaged 10 percent. I am sure that that is very largely due to the fact that we have such a high vacancy rate in Manitoba and in Winnipeg at the present time and that in itself provides a very great degree of protection because the people who are faced with a rental increase that isn't justifiable certainly can find alternative accommodation at a more competitive rate.

MR. CORRIN: Mr. Chairman, generally, in response to that, I can say that I agree that the observation of my friend is correct, and where there is that sort of fluidity represented by a high vacancy rate in an urban market, where there is an opportunity for mobility, I think it is sound economic theory to suggest, as he has, that supply and demand are in a sort of equilibrium and there is a built-in market protection.

However, Mr. Chairman, there is, I think, a special factor when we talk about shelter allowances for the elderly and that is their general disposition which simply motivates against mobility. In other words, old people generally are settled in, are stably resident in an apartment and usually don't want to move. Usually they are comfortable where they are; they have friends; it's an old neighbourhood or community. Therefore, Mr. Chairman, unlike most other renters, seniors, I think, will as a group tend, and I know I am generalizing, but will as a group tend to remain in occupancy even though the percentage of their income that's being put to rent is growing and is somewhat higher than should be the case.

I suppose I am bit concerned about that, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that, as the Minister has said, it doesn't appear to be a problem, but I still think that it can be a problem and certainly will be a problem as the market tightens up, and with the low construction levels, Mr. Chairman, both low MHRC, senior citizen construction levels, and private sector levels, I think it's a reasonable expectation that the market will be tightening over the next four or five years anyway. I think as a matter of policy the government should be working now to close that sort of potential loophole. I'm not satisfied that it's also reflecting the situation of all the senior tenants. As I said before, if even only one is being exploited, it's one too many, so I think the government should act.

The other problem I have, Mr. Chairman, and this is something that I think we should deal with in this program, is the situation in the core area of the city. The member says that there are ample available vacant units. I guess two questions arise. One, what is the nature and quality of those vacant units? And in the core area, Mr. Chairman, I can tell you that most of them I would describe as derelictions, not simply vacancies, and many of them, I think, are classified that way by city building inspection staff.

Mr. Chairman, we have to deal with that and we also have to look at the demolition problem, because you know in the inner city, Mr. Chairman, we lost almost exactly 1,000 units alone between 1978 and 1979, and that's remarkable. You will remember this afternoon that I said that we had roughly in 1980 only 1,000 single family starts in the whole City of Winnipeg, so we lost as many units of housing in Winnipeg's core as we had built in the whole Greater City of Winnipeg in the same year. It's deceiving when you talk as the Minister does of high vacancy rates.

There are a lot of people, Mr. Chairman, and I am sure you know many of them too, who choose to live in the core area. They choose to live there, I guess, because they've lived there all their life and that's where their associations and their friends, and their sense of Winnipeg community is. It's a place where they can comfortably speak their own languages and do their own thing within a cultural environment that suits them, so they stay there even though it's not as nice a place to live as St. Vital or Charleswood or St. James, and goodness knows there are a lot of risks, but they stay there.

My grandfather, Mr. Chairman, lived on Dufferin Avenue for years after it was no longer safe to walk out on the street, and notwithstanding what he was told by relatives he continued to walk the street. His attitude was he had done it since he was 18 years old and he was going to continue to do it until he was forced to leave the house. But, Mr. Chairman, when we are talking about people like that who don't want to leave their homes, who don't want to leave their apartments, whatever; what good is the high vacancy rate out in the suburbs, in the Maples, or in any one of the other suburban areas where the vacancy rates are pretty high, admittedly. What are we doing in order to make sure, through the SAFER Program, that those people aren't being exploited?

Mr. Chairman, we have a situation where people can be gouged in two ways. You can be gouged by an unscrupulous landlord who makes you pay too much for your accommodation knowing that you can't afford it, or a landlord who knows that you can't afford very much and gives you so little that it isn't even worth the value he's put on it. Very often, Mr. Speaker, there are situations that are just borderline — there's a term the city uses when they board up the premises, I don't know whether any of my colleagues can help me, but they are premises that are in such a state of disorder that they well could be condemned. That's the term I was looking for — borderline condemnation.

One of the reasons, Mr. Chairman, that they are not condemned is very simple, and that is because a lot of these old folks don't pick up the telephone and report, because they like living on Stella Avenue or Dufferin Avenue or Derby or wherever they are, down on Magnus, they like living there and they don't want to get into trouble with the landlord, and they don't want the authorities to come down on them, so they look the other way and they pretend everything is okay, and they tell their kids that there's no problem, it's quite all right, they are making out fine, and not to bother, not to fuss, and they go on. But, the reality is, Mr. Chairman, for the rent they're paying, they could be living much better and they should have an expectation of living better.

Mr. Chairman, this program has simply never dealt with that problem. It's never tried to adapt. The government has never tried to adapt to assure that there will be minimum standards of occupancy. I say that, Mr. Chairman, with the knowledge that in Britain, the *quid pro quo* for the Shelter Allowance Program is minimum occupancy standards. The regulations in that country are quite explicit. They're enforced rigidly by inspection staff, and although I am sure it's possible for people to be exploited, and I'm sure it happens, there must be people who fall in the cracks, Mr. Chairman, generally speaking that

does not occur, and that's also, Mr. Chairman, a part of the Scandinavian approach to Shelter Allowances.

Again, Mr. Chairman, I would think that the government has a responsibility to upgrade and reform the standards of the program. I for one, Mr. Chairman, would encourage this government as soon as possible to look at some minimum occupancy standard to associate with the suites that are being subsidized by the taxpayer.

In this regard, Mr. Chairman, I did last Thursday, in the course of the core area debate in Private Members' Hour, I went through a lot of housing statistics and I talked about the number of demolitions in the core, and I talked about the number of senior citizens, and I indicated then from statistics that were available that there was a much higher proportion of seniors in the inner core of the city than there were in the city as a whole. When you have a situation, where one must, by the force of logic, associate seniors with deteriorated housing conditions, high levels of demolition, a preponderance of tenant occupied houses and units — that was another thing that was much higher proportionately than it was for the whole city, Mr. Chairman, — when you have all those things, Mr. Chairman, in conjunction one with the other, it leads me, and I am sure it leads members opposite, to consider the possibility of upgrading the program in order not to facilitate the unscrupulous ends of cynical and exploitative landlords. If there is any part of the city, Mr. Chairman, where those landlords are to be found, if there is any part of the City of Winnipeg where you are likely to fall upon one of those jackals, it's in the inner core of Winnipeg.

I am not suggesting that there are many landlords like that, Mr. Chairman, but having served three years on Winnipeg's City Council and I believe my honourable friend, the Minister, served on the Committee of Environment for a year or two, he knows as well as I do that there are certain people that are in the business of people exploitation, not housing rental, and we don't have to name names, Mr. Chairman, their names usually appear on the court dockets anyway, and they're certainly well known to anyone who's ever attended a City of Winnipeg Environment Committee meeting, because they're a perpetual problem and they're the feign of many councillors existences.

So, Mr. Chairman, I'm saying that we have to do something to address this problem and I'm suggesting that the most appropriate response is to have basic minimum occupancy standards.

(Interjection)— The Member for Pembina, Mr. Chairman, agrees that it's a good idea and I'm pleased to hear that. I would ask then, Mr. Chairman, whether the Minister, —(Interjection)— oh, on advice from the Minister, he's been told to tell me, Mr. Chairman, it's a lousy idea, a terrible idea.

I would ask the Minister then, Mr. Chairman, whether he can advise us whether the government will be taking any initiative in this regard and if so, when and what kind of reform they plan.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, we're always prepared to look at measures that are required. At the moment, as I said, we do not see exorbitant increases being put onto recipients of shelter allowances. If we, because of changing vacancy rates, reducing vacancy rates, if we saw something

happening in the future, then we would certainly take whatever action is necessary to prevent that from occurring. But I would also like to point out that in response to some of the things my honourable friend has said, that senior citizens who are in units that are subsidized units, or in the private market, the private sector market, they're not in subsidized housing to begin with, where they might be ghettoized, shall we say, in only senior citizens, non-profit senior citizens' dwellings. In this particular case, they're found throughout the rental market, so that if they were in a particular apartment block, it's not likely that apartment block would be totally populated by seniors on SAFFR. It would be populated by others who are under normal circumstances renting a similar suite.

There's a direct comparison available. That's part of the whole mediation arbitration process, where we compare suite for suite within the same block and also for comparable suites within the same general area. So there is a definite check, if somebody wanted to put through a large increase on SAFFR recipients, then they would have to do it to everybody else in the block and the whole thing would result perhaps, in a protest that resulted in mediation, arbitration, maybe even compulsory arbitration and we're seeing that the results that I put forth a few days ago, in the debate on the Rentalsman's Office, show that we are indeed rolling back through the arbitration process, significant numbers of rental increases that are deemed to be excessive, by the standards of comparison that we have. So there isn't that serious a risk at the moment and the whole check of having people subsidized in suites that are just a matter of some suites, in the whole block, gives us that kind of ability to check whether or not these people are being asked to pay more than they should. A direct method of comparison and a direct ability to know that the market place will take effect and prevent owners from doing that, even if they wanted to do it.

So I believe that that part of it is very nicely in hand and as I say, if anything happens in future that would indicate that we should be taking direct action and intervening in the situation to ensure that our shelter allowances do not promote higher rents in the market, we're prepared to look at it and take action.

Now, the member asked as well about the types of accommodation that are available for people on shelter allowances or for the people whether or not there was sufficient accommodation available of certain types and from the information we have, and I might indicate that through both the rental arbitration process, the Tenancy Arbitration Bureau and the SAFFR program, we are having probably the best feedback that we've ever been able to achieve in this province on what types of rent structures are available and what types of rental accommodation, what specifically people are paying. The people on SAFFR for instance, have to provide us with the receipts so that we know exactly what rents they're paying. We can then compare that and know what's available and all of this information that we're gathering and I said to the member, that I would be very prepared to share it with him when it is totally available, but all of the initial indications that we have, are that there is sufficient accommodation

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available in virtually all types and all levels of rental rates and that in fact, as I indicated a week or so ago from the information that we have through the Tenancy Arbitration Bureau, that specifically lower level rental accommodation is as much available, if not more so, than the upper level rental accommodation. So there doesn't seem to be a concern in that regard.

With respect to getting down to the vacancy rate in Inner City for instance according to statistics that we have, both from CMHC and other sources, the vacancy rate is very little different in the Inner City than it is in the rest of the city. There's very little difference there and there's still appears to be a good level of availability, again another check in balance on ensuring that the proper level of rental accommodation is available to people who are on rental supplements.

We think that the fact that there is a great choice available to people in the market place, I acknowledge the statement of the member that older people or elderly may tend not to want to move from an area, or even from a particular suite, but as I say the fact that for the most part, there is blocks in which other people who are not on shelter allowances are located. They're probably being prevented from having any gouging take place. At the same time we are going to be doing evaluations this summer on the quality of standards. We're not totally opposed to the suggestion of the member that there should be an evaluation, a standard level set for people to receive the shelter allowances, but we believe that there would be tremendous requirements of time on the part of our staff. It could turn into a bureaucratic nightmare, if every single rental accommodation unit, for which shelter allowances were being paid had to be approved as to standard and that is the experience, from all the information we can get, that is, the experience that they've had in the United States and other jurisdictions in which shelter allowances are prevalent. So we would prefer not to have to do that, if we could in some way achieve an evaluation of the type of accommodation, the standard of accommodation, and we are going to be doing some evaluations throughout the remainder of this year, to satisfy ourselves as to whether or not there are concerns that should be addressed with respect to standards for accommodations for those who are receiving shelter allowances.

If we aren't satisfied that it can't be done without setting these standards and without setting up the bureaucracy that would require us to give a seal of approval to every unit for which somebody has applied for a shelter allowance, then perhaps that might be the answer that we'd have to turn to, but at the moment we don't believe it's necessary and we'd rather not take that step of creating this massive bureaucracy to do that kind of evaluation in order to achieve something which we think can be achieved by an ongoing evaluation process that's within our powers to do at the present time; and I was banking the questions.

Can I get to the one question about demolitions? I haven't provided that information but demolitions, as the member probably knows, in Winnipeg have varied historically and it's interesting that the high points seemed to have reached in the 1976-77 time period, at which there was 954 in 1976 and 717 in

1977. Demolitions then started to reduce to the point that in 1979 there were 389 units demolished in Winnipeg; and this is information that we have from the City of Winnipeg.

As well, starts, the member referred to the fact that there was only 1,000 housing starts in Winnipeg and according to the City of Winnipeg's figures there was 1,669, which admittedly was a very low point in 1980, but that is largely due as the member knows, to the overbuild in 1978, in which housing starts hit 9,706.

Current projections that we have from the City of Winnipeg are in expectations for 1981 of 4,000 which would be a significant increase in the housing starts; that's the current projection from CMHC.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Wellington.

MR. CORRIN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, just as a matter of record I want to note that we were talking about housing and we were talking in terms of single family — I don't know why my friend brings that to my attention except that he possibly thinks that I was inaccurate — but I too have those figures and I can confirm the figure he gave and can break them down into single family units, 1,000 in 1980. It started in Winnipeg semi-detached, 26; rural, 151; and apartment, 491.

Mr. Chairman, whether you deal with them as individual all-time lows or whether you deal with them as accumulative gross all-time low, is irrelevant. I think what I said this afternoon about the impact of those numbers on the construction industry as it stands — I don't know if that's why he mentioned that — but I had the information, I didn't ask for it.

Mr. Chairman, just addressing myself, before we go on to what my honourable friend says about the program and his unwillingness to, as he puts it, get into more bureaucratic administration of the program, I can tell him that in the core area it is highly unlikely that he will find that other tenants supportively are reporting incidents of rent gouging.

Firstly, Mr. Chairman, many of the tenants who share apartment type accommodation don't even speak the same language, so the levels of communication are very low in the inner core, neighbour to neighbour and so on. You also have, Mr. Chairman, a number of people who are totally unfamiliar with the exigencies of tenant life. In other words, Mr. Chairman, they simply don't know what other people pay for comparable situations and premises. A lot of them, simply either because they're aged or because they're very new to this country and our city, are simply unaware of situations where they're in jeopardy and maybe being exploited.

Also, Mr. Chairman, I guess the third point is that the core area is not exactly high rise heaven. It's true that there are a lot of rental units but, Mr. Chairman, anyone who's walked the streets of the core knows that most of the units that are available are rather of modest nature and as my statistics related last Thursday indicated, a vast number of them were built long before the day of the highrise. So you get a situation where you have a lot of what we used to call tenements and buildings of that sort of design and nature, that are being used for rental purposes. A lot of them are actually just old single family

houses that have been duplexed, triplexed, quadruplexed, etc., etc., ad infinitum until I went into a house two weekends ago.

You find a house where on the main floor there were three suites — and there was a bathroom on the second floor, and on the second and third floor there was three more — so there was a total of six suites in what essentially was at one time maybe 70 years ago, a gracious old home. None of the suites were more than two rooms really — well I guess you could say two and a half if you count the kitchen as a room, but most of them were pretty small — but essentially what you were dealing with, Mr. Chairman, in that particular house, every single person was from the Philippines. Virtually nobody in the house had been in Canada longer than about three or four years; those were the old-timers. Most of the people were wholly unfamiliar with anything. I don't think they've heard of many government programs or anything else.

I'm saying to the Minister that he would be very naive if he believed that the normal middle class consciousness will protect the consumer rental premises in these situations. We're dealing with a rather unsophisticated, is not the word I'd like to use but I'll use it, Mr. Chairman, unsophisticated consumer person who is easily exploited and somebody that I think government should protect. You know their income is ever so precious, these are the people who have the least disposable income for necessities such as rent and food and so on. These are the people who truly are at the very bottom end. I don't have to tell anybody here that very often they work harder than anyone else. These are the people who are very often put in jobs where they're working as if they were on a treadmill. So, Mr. Chairman, given all their life circumstances, the fact that they want to be close to their work which is often in the factories, they don't have a car and they don't know their way around the city so they want to be able to walk or take one bus without a transfer down William Avenue or something, given all these circumstances and the ones I've already related, these are the ones who are most easily exploited; and when it comes to the old people, Mr. Chairman, what I've said goes in spades.

The old people are always the most vulnerable people in a society, with the exception of the children. But, Mr. Chairman, they don't even have experience to fall back on and they have to rely sometimes on people they shouldn't have to rely on.

But, Mr. Chairman, I'm suggesting that the government is making a mistake and I think that they should look very seriously at doing what has been done in the U.K. and in Scandinavia. I think that those countries are much more familiar with the realities of shelter allowance; they've had it for a much longer time; the model they've developed I think is probably far more comprehensive and I think you know that we should give serious consideration to this sort of approach.

The other thing I wanted to make a note of, that a reporting system based on 2,300 respondents isn't much good; it doesn't tell you really a hell of a lot, Mr. Chairman, about the program. Until the program is fully utilized or at least utilized to certain base levels, we're literally dealing with a drop in the bucket. You know the Minister has suggested that he

thinks he's got 25 percent of those who might be eligible in the program now. I think frankly, Mr. Chairman, just knowing what I know about the senior citizen population, I can't believe that 2,300 represents 25 percent of the total available, eligible group, I really don't. I mean that's basically pretty naive. That would put the group somewhere around 10,000. Now, there are 100,000 seniors in Manitoba, roughly I think the rule of the thumb is about 10 percent of the population. I presume that a goodly number of those people live in rental situations. I can't believe that we're talking only 10 percent of Manitoba's seniors being eligible, notwithstanding even the numbers that are living in non-eligible public housing. I can't believe it. So again, I issue a caveat. I think the Minister, until he gets a better resource fix, until he's got a more diverse spectrum on which to draw, would be better to invest a few program dollars on monitoring and evaluation basic minimum standards and so on and be less reliant on free market relationships. I think that there is an implicit naivety in that sort of position.

Mr. Chairman, I also wanted to talk about generally how we house seniors. Shelter allowances are an approach, and I think done properly they're a viable approach but I'm seriously wondering when they stop being viable, and what I'm referring to Mr. Chairman, is the sort of inflation cost that's built into this sort of program. Whenever I've thought about it, Mr. Chairman — and occasionally I'm sure were all moved to contemplate where these programs are going — whenever I've thought about this particular program, it occurs to me that we're dealing with a very variable commodity, namely rental housing.

This afternoon in my opening statement I indicated that construction and building costs were leading the way along with health care costs in Canadian cost of living figures; whereas we have inflation running at 10 percent for most consumer items, we have construction, the cost of building running at 13 and 14 percent. So, Mr. Chairman, we have a concern.

We also know that we're having difficult beating down the most influential factor associated with construction costs, interest rates. We also know, Mr. Chairman, in this particular city that we have a construction problem; the problem being that it's not happening. Residential construction has flattened out over the past couple of years. I believe, Mr. Chairman, and I guess only time will tell the story, I believe that in two to five years we're going to have a very serious vacancy crisis, I think as a result of demolitions; as a result of these high interests rates and high building costs and all the other factors, I think that we're going to find ourselves facing a crunch. I think when that happens, Mr. Chairman, we're going to find ourselves with very high rent levels being imposed on tenants.

I'm particularly alarmed at the number of units that are being bought by outsiders. You know somebody today showed me some statistics and it was the usual stuff we're hearing about in the newspapers. Another few apartments were purchased by a company from Vancouver. The units are selling at \$11,000 or \$12,000.00. They're very competitive market rates, Mr. Chairman. Just one of my clients last week sold an apartment on Sargent Avenue, I think it was 22 suites or thereabouts, \$11,000 a unit. Now, if you come from Vancouver and you see

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something that's selling for \$11,000 you don't even ask really, you don't ask much, you do it on the telephone.

If you've got expendable money that you've got to roll over and most of these people, Mr. Chairman, they're companies and individuals who are rolling capital gains and they've got to use the tax system and they've got to use it cleverly and shrewdly. So what they're doing is they're accumulating capital cost allowances and they're rolling over recapture into further capital cost allowance situations. That's the only way they can operate with the tax laws as they are in Canada today. You're a dead duck if you let the taxman come and take it.

Now, when you're talking about a volatile market like Vancouver, where in the last six months you had housing price increases in the order of 80 percent, you are speaking dynamite because the recaptures, when somebody takes a capital gain on something that went up 80 percent in six months, can you imagine, Mr. Chairman, the recaptures are enormous. So they are looking for shelters and the law says you've got to keep your shelters in the same classifications, you can't roll it into stocks; you can't roll it into other sorts of registered plans; you can't go into unit trusts; you've got to keep going in the rental market; otherwise, Mr. Chairman, you lose your capital gain advantages and when you do that, Mr. Chairman, you're losing money. You're not letting your capital work, and that's a fundamental of the development and the building accommodation industry.

So, Mr. Chairman, they're looking around and they're saying, there's the place. That is the cheapest housing in Canada. We can buy more for the dollar. Our money is safe, we can continue to take our depreciation allowance and we've got an investment, they know when the rent controls are off, they know that construction is at all-time lows and they know all these things, Mr. Chairman. They know where building costs are going to be in the year 1983-84, we all do. We grimace when we think about it, but we all know where it's going so, Mr. Chairman, they invest.

Mr. Chairman, if we expect that we're going to be able to control those sorts of predatory investors because that's what they are. They're combing the country for the best sort of opportunities. If we think we're going to be able to protect tenants from those sort of investors when they start to make their move, we're crazy. Renters, they're just like everyone else; they're just like the lenders, Mr. Chairman, they've got to protect themselves against inflation and they're going to recoup on their investment. They're going to make profit and, Mr. Chairman, the way they are going to do that is they're going to raise the rent; and with that, Mr. Chairman, in mind, I'm saying that this government has to do something in terms of first of all looking at where they're going to be vis-a-vis the cost of the Shelter Allowance Program in the year 1985 because you know they are going to continue to subsidize, Mr. Chairman. There are going to be guys in the boardrooms back in Calgary and Vancouver that are laughing all the way to the bank. The money is going to be rolling in and its going to be the taxpayers of Manitoba who are paying the shot.

Mr. Chairman, I'm not making up what is going on in terms of the market is being evidenced every day.

It's been confirmed and corroborated. They are moving into the apartment market. It's not the housing market that's so stimulated, Mr. Chairman, the action is in the apartment units. So, Mr. Chairman, everybody knows that those are the only commercially viable situations anywhere for the real investor. You don't make money running a few houses unless you gouge somebody. You can make money on apartments and you can make it honestly.

So, Mr. Chairman, I'm saying that the government has some hard decisions to make and they'd better start contemplating where they are going now, because they can find themselves — if they do what they say they are going to do to upgrade the Shelter Allowance and make it a workable program and get as many people into it as possible both shelter for the elderly and the SAFFER Program — if they do that, Mr. Chairman, they may be subsidizing a lot of landlords, and the money may not even end up in terms of tax dollars in the Manitoba Government's pocket.

Now, Mr. Chairman, a few years ago there was a lot of criticism about the high cost of construction of public housing for all sorts of people and I suppose thrown into that pot were the seniors but, Mr. Chairman, I tell you that public housing may be on its way back in. The reality is, Mr. Chairman, that it creates jobs in Manitoba; it creates a real investment, something you can touch, you can feel. If you do it right, Mr. Chairman, and you finance it the way government should, you don't even have to pay some of the exorbitant interest rates that are being passed on to the other consumers. Government has access to funds that are considerably lower, the prime rate for government is much cheaper. It can comb the face of the globe looking for opportunities, for borrowing opportunities and they do it, Mr. Chairman. So, Mr. Chairman, if we're talking in terms of program potency for the Eighties, we should be seriously reviewing the public housing concept again. It may not be so farfetched as we think, particularly, Mr. Chairman, in view of the fact that the private sector is not exactly manifesting a desire to invest in the city's core where we really need to plug in some housing; where we need to fill some of these demolition cavities; where we need to get rid of some of the low-quality housing; where we need to revitalize and renovate the heart and soul of our city. So, Mr. Chairman, I suggest that it is time to start looking.

One of the things that has alarmed me, Mr. Chairman, in this regard, is the rather despondent approach the government has taken with their Federal counterparts. I support that one can explain it, and you can explain it in a few words, it's because when you preach restraint and when you blame everything on the spending of government you can't go around complaining and beefing and pounding on the Federal door when they do the same thing. You would be accused of being hypocritical. So now that all the Federal funding programming is starting to drop away and the Feds are starting to take the tough line and they are starting, pardon the pun, to agree with Manitoba's "Lyon," Mr. Chairman, we are finding this government in a very difficult philosophical quandary. What they should be doing, and I am sure they agree in what they want to do, is insist that most funding be allocated on a cost-

shared basis with Manitoba so we can pick up some of that cheap money that used to be available under The National Housing Act. But, Mr. Chairman, they are not doing that. What they are doing, Mr. Chairman, is they are sitting contently back — perhaps not contently, Mr. Chairman, uneasily back — and they are simply passively viewing the situation and remaining unmoved. They are simply not doing what they should be.

Mr. Chairman, they should be giving the Federal Government hell. They should be asking the Federal Government to cost-share as many housing programs as they possibly can because, Mr. Chairman, you know, in the years — if I turn around, I could draw it out of my briefcase — I think it is safe to say, Mr. Chairman, in the year, and perhaps I should — I know that publicly-supported housing programs, Mr. Chairman, between 1952 and 1976 or 1977, represented about \$141 million in investment in the City of Winnipeg. A lot of that money, Mr. Chairman, a lot of that money was contributed by the Federal level of government. Now, Mr. Chairman, that money is essentially cheap money; it is found money. I think it is poor business on the part of government not to make some attempt to pick it up.

The Federal Government is right when it said that Manitoba exploited — the Federal Government use to be a bit critical of Manitoba whenever we had the cost-sharing negotiations, and I remember talking to the former Premier Schreyer about this — the Federal Government used to always complain that Manitoba was one of the provinces that exploited their programming to the disadvantage of the Federal level; and it was true. We reckoned that we had a lot to do and I think we were rather opportunistic, in the sense, Mr. Chairman, that we saw a good deal. We figured that with — I'm thinking now — Section 43 money, public housing money, it was available, 90 percent from the Federal Government at a subsidized rate. So, Mr. Chairman, we picked it up. And the Federal Government cried; they cried crocodile tears and they complained and they said how expensive it was and how they wanted to do a global budgeting and they used to take us to Ottawa all the time. This wasn't the only area; we had many areas, Community Services was even a bigger problem.

Mr. Chairman, the point is that we built it; we got it in the air; we created jobs in Manitoba and do you know who subsidized it? Not Ottawa, the money was coming via Ottawa but, really, it was Ontario and it was Alberta and it was British Columbia. You know, Mr. Chairman, it made sense. We were literally robbing from the rich to give to the poor, and we were doing it all legally. —(Interjection)— Well, it was legal. Yes, it's not robbery, it was quite legal and it was shrewd, Mr. Chairman, because we took advantage of a good program.

Now, what we would have done, I believe, Mr. Chairman, and what I believe we will do if we are so fortunate as to be re-elected, is take up a strident battle with the Federal Government on the question of access to Federal public funding for housing because, Mr. Chairman, this is the only way to go. This government has stood idly by. They have seen most of the Federal programs go and then they saw the Community Services program, another Federal program, go, another \$40 million for the City of

Winnipeg on the wind, Mr. Chairman. They don't seem to understand that Manitoba is a net beneficiary of cost-sharing programs. When this rather black and white monochromatic approach to restraint and global budgeting, which has been so much evidenced by this government. We can go through a number of programs but we won't, Mr. Chairman, that sort of adherence to that doctrinaire dogma has been disadvantageous to the people of this province, and particularly, Mr. Chairman, to those who are underemployed, the tradesmen, the construction people, those who are most vulnerable in the economy and those who are in need of the housing.

So, Mr. Chairman, I think generally that the government has to give consideration to how it is going to deal with these problems and what it is going to do and whether it is going to just stand by. If I have a criticism and if I am called upon to do a eulogy after the next election, and one never knows, I will say that that is the main reason that the people of Manitoba lost heart with this government, because the government simply didn't show the flexibility, the willingness to adapt its approach to practical exigencies. It always simply resisted the path of least resistance and always took the high road, you know, marching to its own drummer. I am sure it is a matter of conscience and it's a matter of principle and a matter of dogma. But, Mr. Chairman, Manitoba is not built that way; Manitoba has to be, like the people, it has to be a resourceful government. You have to scratch for a living in Manitoba; that's the nature of it. It is not a boom province; it probably never will be, but if you are resourceful and creative, you can make it work. But it takes some effort and some initiative and it takes a willingness to grapple with issues in sometimes unorthodox ways.

So, Mr. Chairman, I would like to hear what the honourable member has to say. I suppose I may well receive the usual diatribe I got from the former Minister of Economic Development, who would tell me about the high cost of public housing, or tell me how terrible it was and how they built so many units in 1978 with the moneys we appropriated and would play on his violin at great length about that and about the high vacancy rate, and generally would extol the free market system and the wisdom of his Federal counterparts in closing down "wasteful programs". But, you know, that is rhetoric, Mr. Chairman. I don't necessarily expect it from this Minister but that seems to be the official party line, over and over again. We heard it in the House during question period on Northern Affairs from the Premier this afternoon. It is oft repeated.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to know what the government's approach to this admittedly very difficult problem will be in the time allotted to it, I won't say next year's, Mr. Chairman.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, I hate to disappoint the member but I'm not going to do any of the things that he suggested that I might be doing in response to his diatribe because I would just like to point out that despite the fact that he proffers the opinion that we've ignored all Federal moneys and that we have not taken advantage of things that are made available to us, and we've not done all of the wonderful things that he says his government did in

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the past. I would like to point out that when they were building public housing, they had to borrow 90 percent of the capital required for the public housing, then they had to cost-share operating losses 50 percent in order to achieve their objectives of providing public housing.

What we have been doing is taking advantage of the programs that are available to us, and I might suggest that these programs are far more beneficial both to the people of the province and our government in the net effect of what they are. They're under Non-profit Housing in Section 56 of the NHA, and in this particular program, Mr. Chairman, the capital is provided by private groups and these groups are groups in society who I think we should support as much as possible because they're service clubs like the Lions, and many religious groups such as the United Church in the past year constructing McClure Place; the United Lutheran Service Club in fact opened that particular unit out in north Winnipeg, Carriage House North, prior to my being the Minister responsible; Bethel Mennonite Care Services Incorporated, and so on and so forth. We have all of these groups who provide 5 percent of the money. The province matches that 5 percent. The capital is borrowed and written down to the point that it's amortized over 35 years and written down to only 2 percent being paid on it, which allows them then to provide very economic rental accommodation.

Just for the member's benefit, let me tell him that in the past three years in 1979, 1980, the past two years plus this year, it will have resulted in \$57 million worth of housing construction in this province, for which our contribution is 5 percent. That, Mr. Chairman, is a great deal more beneficial than any of the programs that the member opposite is extolling the virtues of because it does not tie our money in. In fact, it enables us to take advantage of these Federal programs under Section 56.

I might indicate that these programs resulted in over 1,000 units in the past two years; a projection of 650 units for this year, and all of these at the most beneficial rates that we can imagine under these kinds of circumstances. So all of this, Mr. Chairman, is our response to it, not just throwing money away at problems as the member would suggest in the past, but making the most efficient and beneficial use and getting non-profit organizations involved so that they can administer and operate these facilities in the future and take the burden off our area.

MR. CORRIN: Mr. Chairman, this old rhubarb about throwing money at problems is a bit of a joke when you take into consideration what we've been discussing tonight with respect to the SAFER Program. I find it somewhat ironic and humorous, ironically humorous, that the member would even have the temerity to suggest that the former government was throwing money at problems when here we have a program which he himself has described tonight, as not being able to fulfill the purpose to which it was designed. Mr. Chairman, I am embarrassed that he would even launch such a bit of spurious invective.

Mr. Chairman, he must think \$57 million is . . . I suppose he thinks that's a massive uptake of Federal funding. Mr. Chairman, between 1970-77 the former New Democrat Government, with respect only to

inner city now, Mr. Chairman, — I'm not going to go beyond that — the inner city alone picked up under Section 43 of The NHA, we picked up \$57,919,000.00. That's one program. Do you want to hear the rest? Mr. Chairman, non-profit housing, which this government has done nothing for, Mr. Chairman, absolutely nothing, it's a joke; we picked up \$18,195,000.00.

Mr. Chairman, the sad fact is that the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation has virtually been closed down for three years. The other Minister was much more candid. We now have a Minister who wants to dwell on the more positive aspects. The reality is, Mr. Chairman, that there has been virtually no building of infill housing in the core area of the city. With respect to that, Mr. Chairman, as a question and as a challenge — and I will be chastized — how many units of infill housing has this government put in place in the core area of Winnipeg in the past year?

MR. CHAIRMAN: (a) — pass — the Honourable Member for Wellington.

MR. CORRIN: How many units of infill housing has this government put in place in the core area of the City of Winnipeg in the past year?

MR. CHAIRMAN: (a) — pass; Clause 5 — pass — the Honourable Member for Wellington.

MR. CORRIN: Mr. Chairman, he may not want to answer, but having had his opportunity to participate in the debate, and suggests that we were throwing money at problems and that they were being more responsible, it's a very simple matter, — how many units of infill housing has the government built in the core area of Winnipeg in the past year — and surely the member isn't going to tell me that they don't feel they should exploit some of the many residential lots they own in the core area of Winnipeg and build on them. Can the member tell me how many lots they've developed, Mr. Chairman? I presume he's now ready?

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, the member keeps coming back to his original statement which I didn't address because it just seemed so preposterous for him to suggest that we ought to go on merrily building houses at a time when there was no demand for it; merrily building rental housing stock at a time when there was no demand for it. He is suggesting that we use it as an instrument of building up the construction trade industry in this province rather than for its mandate, which is to provide housing in response to the needs that are there, and when there aren't needs, we don't go building a whole group of buildings that will sit idle. We have several projects right now in the core area that we're having difficulty filling.

The waiting list for housing in the core area has gone down dramatically over the last three years. The member doesn't even seem to recognize what's happened in the marketplace. He wants us to go on with a constant program, stimulating the economy, providing jobs on a make-work basis for housing and rental accommodation that isn't required, which would be in my view the most ridiculous thing and also the most damaging thing to the construction

trades because we would be artificially propping them up and then pulling the pins out from under them at a point in time when there was no demand for it and you couldn't carry on with the programs. That would be a lot more damaging than to let them go in response to demand as it exists and putting the money in when it's needed; not when there is absolutely no demand for it.

MR. CORRIN: Mr. Chairman, that's a very naive and unwise premise. The fact is, Mr. Chairman, that we have to live within reality, and for him to suggest that this is not a time to make public investment is sheer nonsense.

Mr. Chairman, there has never been a time in the history of this province where there was a greater need for public involvement in the construction industry. That's a reality. I don't know why the government is so adamantly resistant to that logic. There has never been such a crying need for help. They must read the newspapers. They must know the situation but yet, Mr. Chairman, they've decided that they are going to let normal market forces carry the day, and they're waiting. Mr. Chairman, what in heck is ever going to happen in the core area? Does the Minister really think that developers are going to come into the core and clean up his mess? Does he really think that they are going to buy all these bombed out little vacant lots? Is that what he thinks, because that's the way they've been behaving for three-and-a-half years, Mr. Chairman?

They've been doing nothing; they've been watching it decay; they've been watching it deteriorate; they've been watching the numbers as they roll in; they've been watching the demolitions; they've been watching the fires; they've been watching all the rest of it and all the indicators are negative, Mr. Chairman. There is nothing positive in the core area and I'd like to see anybody here stand up and defend what this government's done in the core.

Mr. Chairman, I suggest to you that there is no defence. Mr. Chairman, there is every reason why we should be building in the core area. Now I'm not suggesting, Mr. Chairman, that there is no will on the part of this government to do that because we know that in the next five years there will be a core area initiative; but we also know that the government has lost millions of dollars while the Federal Government has pulled out of numerous programs, while the Federal Government has pulled out its community services program which was very helpful in the core area. That was \$40 million alone I think; it would represent a \$40 million investment loss this year alone, Mr. Chairman.

It seems to me that it behooves the government to think of doing something that will ameliorate the situation. Rather than simply standing idly by and saying well, everybody seems to be confused and everybody seems to be unmoved by the plight of the core and the situation, you'd think that they would have done something affirmative. They would have attacked the problem; they would have attempted to tackle it; but I see no evidence of that, Mr. Chairman, I see no evidence at all.

Mr. Chairman, if we had a report on the private sector involvement in the core over the past four years, I'm sure we'd find that there's been virtually none. It needs stimulation, the private sector is not likely, Mr. Chairman, to become involved in the core

without the partnership and joint responsibility of governments. It's a high risk situation, a high risk investment problem and they're probably prudent to stay out unless they have some reinforcement and some buttressing from government. So, Mr. Chairman, the Minister has been unable to cite one incident. I was hoping he could tell me that maybe 100 infill housing units have been put into the core. Goodness knows there's a need.

If he wants to find families, Mr. Chairman, if he doesn't believe there's a problem, I will take him to my constituency and I will take him to the constituency of St. Matthews; and I will take him to the constituency of Logan; and I will take him to the constituency of Burrows and Winnipeg Centre and so on and so forth and I will show him real poverty. I will show him deplorable housing conditions. We can rub his nose in it, Mr. Chairman, if he wants and then he can, having confronted reality, come back here and tell me honestly whether he thinks that MHRC has committed itself to its responsibility in the past four years.

So, Mr. Chairman, to stand up and do a little number and tell us how they've picked up a little bit of money here and they've invested it around the province, what has that got to do with the problem that's confronting people right here in the centre of the city? It's a problem because associated with this problem, Mr. Chairman, are numerous other ancillary problems and it's a breeding ground; it's a breeding ground for vice and profligacy and hopeless abandonment.

Mr. Chairman, this government talked — and I'm repeating this I think for the third time today — they were elected on a platform that involved an uphill neighbourhood program and it bears repetition, Mr. Chairman, and they should never forget. They were elected with a mandate to do an uphill neighbourhood program and it involved grants to first-time homeowners; it involved low interest loans that were subsidized by government; it involved building regulation — they talked then about building standards, Mr. Chairman — they were ever so explicit about advertising that then, Mr. Chairman, when they wanted to be elected in Logan, Wellington, St. Matthews and Winnipeg Centre, then they talked about forcing the building codes, getting the inspectors on the streets. Then they talked about the gouging landlords; then they talked about the deplorable housing conditions; then they talked about the need for home ownership and that's the only true safeguard against exploitative landlords, Mr. Chairman, and all the other deplorable conditions we are talking about. It also teaches people, Mr. Chairman, what real costs are associated with property ownership. I don't see how we ever expect tenants to really understand, unless we give them a chance to be owners, then they will understand what an owner is confronted with.

So, Mr. Chairman, they talked about all that; they made all those promises. But they didn't deliver. They punked out, Mr. Chairman, and that was a worthwhile program. I can't remember, I am just reflecting, I think there was even a mortgage subsidy component to the Uphill Neighbourhood Program. There were three or four levels, and I think they were talking about tax credits, some sort of property tax credit for persons who renovated homes of a certain

age so that, I suppose, construction would be stimulated, renovative and construction would be stimulated and one presumes there would be jobs as well, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, that is not the approach they have taken in government; that's been abandoned. We look at the CHRP level, Mr. Chairman, I look at the Critical Home Report interest rate and it's a joke, it's a joke. What is it, 17 percent, Mr. Chairman. Can you believe it? Your government, using your tax dollars to help you — 17 percent? Who is fooling who? Who are the real gougers in the Province of Manitoba today, Mr. Chairman? The Federal Government's RAP funds are available at 14 percent, Mr. Chairman. How come on the same streets I can get RAP money for 14 percent and I've got to pay 17 percent for CHRP money? Let the Minister answer that one. That's the sort of consideration his department has been giving to inner-city housing problems. Is that the way he stimulates trades people's work? Is that the way he helps people to protect their neighbourhoods? As I said, it's the same sort of approach he took to the Community Services abandonment and the abandonment of so much of the NHA fund, cost-shared funding. It is laissez faire, every man for himself, you know, that government does best which does least; you know, what's good for General Motors is good for America, and so on and so forth. But the General Motors of the development industry don't want to build in the core and the little tradesmen who live in the core area, the people who actually have to live there, the little guy who does marginal construction work and who might be benefitted if he got a few construction jobs from the CHRP Program, he's not going to get much action because his client, his customer, has to pay 17 percent to this government.

Mr. Chairman, they were so charitable. Did you know, Mr. Chairman, that they advertised in the last report, in the last MHRC report, and I remember it, Mr. Chairman. They advertised that they had changed the eligibility criteria, and I wish I could read it so we could all share in it, Mr. Chairman; they indicated that they had changed the eligibility criteria so that a person only had to have a \$10,000 income. Do you remember that, Mr. Chairman? Do you remember how appreciative it was that it was a \$10,000 use? I think we started at \$11,000, and the Minister can correct me if my memory is incorrect and it is fallible. But I believe we started that program in 1975 or 1976 and it was \$11,000.00. Mr. Chairman, it should have gone up with inflation; eligibility should have gone up. It should have gone up maybe 10 percent a year, like the cost of living. So right now, Mr. Chairman, we should have had people who are earning, I don't know \$15,000 eligible for that program, still eligible so that they can fix up their home, these affluent people earning \$15,000 on Logan or Burrows or wherever.

But, Mr. Chairman, no, no, no, we went the other way, but we announced it with a real banging rhetoric, that they had sort of improved the program and it was now \$10,000, from \$11,000 to \$10,000 and that was an improvement. They didn't bother to advertise that they had increased the interest rates along with the Bank of Canada and they were behaving like a chartered bank; they didn't bother to advertise that component of the program, Mr. Chairman.

So, Mr. Chairman, what did they do for people? What did they do for people? You have got to help people to help themselves, Mr. Chairman. People can't simply draw from the air. If you give a person an opportunity to borrow money at competitive interest rates, in order to improve their own lifestyle, their own living situation, they might do it; they might just agree with you that that's the sort of government programming that smacks of good government, and they might just take you money and pay it back to you too, Mr. Chairman. You won't make a profit on it, but they'll pay you back. But more important, Mr. Chairman, they'll cheaply renovate your old districts and they'll economically put your tradesmen to work. It won't go anywhere near full employment, Mr. Chairman, but at least you will have done something constructive.

But, Mr. Chairman, they have gone just the opposite. They have virtually abandoned the CHRP Program. You know, what do we have? In 1978 — I am just looking through some of these numbers, Mr. Chairman — in 1978 the Critical Home Repair Program had about what, \$3.6 or 3.7 million. I might be off a year, it is hard to read these figures, Mr. Chairman, but I can say that, roughly speaking, in the past three years we have gone from about a \$3.7 million allocation to a \$1.62 million budget. What's the sense of that, Mr. Chairman? Are there fewer poor people; are there fewer houses in need of repair in the Winnipeg inner city; do they believe that, Mr. Chairman? If they do, Mr. Chairman, then I can say that the government is more foolish than even I think. I think, Mr. Chairman, that they're going to have a very difficult lesson which they will successfully learn in the next election in the inner city when these numbers are published because, Mr. Chairman, there comes a day of reckoning. You know most of the people already know that the CHRP money is too expensive, they're still phoning. They're wondering where the ads went, Mr. Chairman. The ads don't appear any more but they're still phoning; they're finding out they've got to pay this exorbitant interest to qualify for a loan and that most of them, if they've come beyond borderline poverty, can't afford to get involved anyway.

That reminds me, Mr. Chairman, this Minister has something else to tell us about. He should tell us about the question I asked him on March 10th about the Federal Government and Indian Reserves. I'm alarmed, Mr. Chairman, that this government decided that they wouldn't qualify people living on reserves for loan assistance for home repairs. Godness knows, Mr. Chairman, if the Minister of Housing goes up to some of the reserve areas in the north he will see squalor. He can really see what it's like to live in Manitoba. It's a real eye-opener, Mr. Chairman. He can see the Third World, he doesn't have to go to Indo-China, he doesn't have to go to South America, his Minister doesn't have to scream epithets about El Salvador; he can see it right here in Manitoba and it's only 600 miles from his doorstep and he can see some of the worst housing and some of the worst living conditions in the world. We're very competitive, Mr. Chairman. He can see people slugging their way through mud up to their knees in the fall and the spring just going door to door. He can see some of the most depressing, deplorable sights he's every likely to lay eyes upon in a lifetime.

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We often hear about the situation in the ghettos of the United States, Mr. Chairman; we hear about the core of Buffalo and Watts and we hear about the horrors of it, Mr. Chairman, we have our own Watts and it's spread all over the north. The only difference is that the powder is spread thin. The powder undoubtedly eventually will be ignited but it's spread thin over hundreds and hundreds of square miles. But, Mr. Chairman, I tell you that at least in Watts you can go to a grocery store and buy some food. I mean if you don't own a car you can at least do something. You have access to . . . You'll get gouged but at least you have access to a quart of milk. Go up north and see what it's like — that's reality.

I can tell the Minister of Northern Affairs who's come in and joined us, Mr. Chairman, that when he goes to some of these communities he's going to have a rough awakening. We received some messages to take back but, Mr. Chairman, I think they should be delivered by the people who live there, who are waiting and waiting and waiting and are very, very angry.

Mr. Chairman, I've asked this in the question period over a week ago, why did the government decide to eliminate the funding program for the reserves. Can we please have that response now a week later?

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, I was unable to give the response in question period the day after and decided that it would be something that should be explained in the Estimates debate because I felt that the Speaker might caution me for taking too long to respond to it.

Mr. Chairman, during the period 1975 to 1977 in which CHRP was being extended to Indian reservations there was approximately \$5 million that was committed during that period of time. Of that about 300, a little over 300,000, was in the form of a grant that the province paid and just over 200,000 was in the form of loans which were guaranteed by the Federal Government. As it turned out almost 80 percent of those loans were defaulted and the Federal Government ended up having to pay the province some \$160,000 on those loan defaults. The Federal Government in its wisdom then decided that they would offer that program themselves since, in effect, they were funding it through the default of loans and having to pay that to the Provincial Government. They are now providing in their Budget close to a million dollars for this particular item — sorry they've spent \$1 million since 1977 and there's another \$900,000 in the Budget which is substantially more, and more beneficial obviously to those people, those Native people who qualify for this program and substantially more than the member's former government colleagues were providing and a much better deal for the Native people. So obviously they're pleased with it and we're pleased with it. The Federal Government is looking after its area of responsibility and able to provide far more funds for this Critical Home Repair Program for the Native peoples who require it.

MR. CORRIN: I guess, Mr. Chairman, it just goes to show you that it depends who you talk to. Perhaps sometimes, I think, it would be a good idea if we did have some Liberals here, Mr. Chairman, because as I say it depends who you talk to.

The Federal Government suggests that they picked up the program when this government indicated that they were not interested in funding federal Indian reserves — that's what the federal sources say. Mr. Chairman, I guess we won't know the truth until we have that debate publicly. But, Mr. Chairman, the one thing I know is that it makes sense to me that people who live on Indian Reserves, wherever possible, have access to the same sort of programming and services as are afforded other residents. Mr. Chairman, if we have a program and we have staff employed to regulate and administer a program I don't think we should give a gall darn on the colour of a person's skin. Frankly, Mr. Chairman, I don't care what The Indian Act says. I can be accused of being penny wise and pound foolish or overly altruistic and idealistic and they can accuse me of what they wish, Mr. Chairman, but it doesn't wash and it doesn't matter. A program is a program is a program and a person is a person is a person. With the experience we've had and particularly, Mr. Chairman, there's good reason to be cynical because we've seen the callousness of this government at its best.

Mr. Chairman, this year we've got a 14 percent general increase but only 4 percent for this particular Crown corporation. Correct me if I'm wrong, Mr. Chairman, but I only see 4 percent on that item sheet. Mr. Chairman, I remember what the figures were like for the other years. I'm not blessed, unfortunately we're not always blessed with a short memory. I can remember the sort of cutbacks that took place in 1978 and 1979, Mr. Chairman. It was a very different government that we were confronting then, Mr. Chairman, and it was a very defensive government that we were confronting; telling us we had to bite the bullet in order to rectify the situation, and the First Minister still tells us that, Mr. Chairman. The others are starting to grow wise, but he's growing long in the tooth and he continues.

Mr. Chairman, the reality is that those loans were in fact protected by the federal level of the government. I don't know what problem there was. If there was a default, the Federal Government picked it up, as far as I know, and that's what I heard the Minister say, he can stand and correct me if I'm wrong. We had our administrative staff in the field. We might have even given some jobs to some Native people, Mr. Chairman, and in view of what we've read in the Winnipeg Free Press in the past couple of days, wouldn't that have been marvellous news for the north, Mr. Chairman. It might have done something constructive for once, as far as northern policy goes. But no, rather we have to have resolutions introduced by government members on the problems of in-migration to the city; that's the alternative resolutions, Mr. Chairman, manana, manana, and not jobs for people who need them and prioritization of those sorts of needs.

Mr. Chairman, I'd ask the Minister whether people who are on pension, Native homeowners who are on pension on reserve, are receiving benefits from either the Federal or the Provincial Government. Does he know that?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. FILMON: Yes, Mr. Chairman, with respect to housing rehabilitation under the Federal RAP program.

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MR. CORRIN: Yes, and does he know whether those are grants or whether there's any interest associated with that money, Mr. Chairman?

MR. FILMON: They're allowed up to \$3,750 in outright grant and the balance up to \$10,000 in subsidized loan, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CORRIN: Can he tell us as a matter of interest whether that is equivalent to the Manitoba program?

MR. FILMON: It's about four-and-one-half times the benefit, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CORRIN: That's good, Mr. Chairman, because I was concerned most of all, as we should be about the pensioners who are absolutely dependent on this sort of thing. So, Mr. Chairman, I suppose in this regard we should for once in this House, take off our hats to our Federal counterparts, because they seem to have evinced a willingness to do what this government will not; put people to work in the north; give people suitable housing; and assume some responsibility for the governance of affairs with respect to the northern part of this province.

Mr. Chairman, I'm wondering if the Minister can tell me why they're charging 17 percent to people taking loans under the CHIRP program. Can we have an explanation of why it's 17 percent?

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, the loans are being made at the provincial rate, which is a preferred rate in the sense that it's approximately 1 percent below conventional commercial rate; and just to correct the misapprehension that he may have, the RAP money that's available is also available at 1 percent below conventional rate from the Federal sources, so there is no difference between the levels, contrary to what he said earlier.

MR. CORRIN: Mr. Chairman, I believe they were talking about 14 or 14.5 percent Federal RAP moneys. Now maybe they get their money cheaper and they have a better prime rate but I believe that is a fact. The Minister can ask his associates. Tomorrow we can bring more material from the RAP office.

MR. FILMON: I'm advised, Mr. Chairman, that although the rates may vary a tiny bit, there wouldn't be any more than 1 percent differential.

MR. CORRIN: Well, Mr. Chairman, until tomorrow we will accept what he said, that there may be only a 1 percent differential. I think it is more like 2 to 3 percent but I will check. I will undertake it first thing in the morning to check with the RAP office and get documentation that will enable us to carry on a more meaningful discussion. But, Mr. Chairman, nevertheless if the Federal Government is choosing to gouge people, I don't know why we have to simply extend that approach to provincial affairs. I don't understand what the rationale for that is. Can the Minister advise why the government has chosen not to take the approach suggested in the uphill neighbourhood program and why they have decided rather to charge people at that sort of rate as opposed to a subsidized rate?

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, I believe that firstly, it's fair to say that our government has some things yet

to complete in its term of office and that a number of the matters of the uphill neighbourhood initiatives might be contained within the Core Area Initiatives Program and other things, that our government has or may be committing funds to. Those are things that are yet to be done and certainly are things in which our government is interested in furthering its accomplishments.

MR. CORRIN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, another question I asked a long time ago — this goes back over a month, Mr. Chairman — to which I never received a reply although the Speaker asked that it be communicated to me by mail. I believe the Minister was ruled out of order by the Speaker when he attempted to reply to it several days after I asked him. I wanted to know why the government had chosen to discriminate against pensioners who are eligible for the SAFER allowance but who did not have pension income in the amount of 50 percent of their total income. Why did the government choose to disqualify those people, Mr. Chairman?

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, I would ask the member to please check his files. I did indeed respond at quite some length, two or three pages I think, a matter of at least three weeks ago now. It was addressed to the member in response to his questions in the House as a result of the Speaker's not — and I can very quickly pull it out of my files, the carbon copy, and give him a copy of it — but essentially, Mr. Chairman, the objective was that we not have an overlapping or a duplicating of programs; that the program is intended to be a shelter allowance, not a complete pension program; and one of the objectives of the program was simply to identify people between the ages of 55 and 64 who were on pension. Among other things, we were looking to target people who perhaps had a deceased spouse, that is a person whose spouse had been the breadwinner and had deceased and this person was probably at an age and a stage where they were unable to go to work and would have pension income as their major source. As well, we were targeting people who might be on a disability pension but were not yet at 65. The operative definition was somebody who was a pensioner and the definition of a pensioner was selected as somebody, the majority of whose income came from pension sources and that was the manner in which these people were targeted.

As I said to the member in the letter that I wrote to him, we are more than willing to take a look at individual cases to find out if there are people who should qualify but who have fallen between the categories, so to speak. As well I can tell you that our department, under certain types of subsidized public housing, have extended a number of the units of rental to people on a subsidized basis who were living a lifestyle of a pensioner but who were not yet 65 years of age, so they were able to live in subsidized housing through some of our programs. So we are endeavouring as much as possible, to bring all of these people who are in need and who we can define, identify and bring them into our shelter programs.

If the member has specific cases that he'd like to draw to my attention, then I'll certainly have our officials look at them and see if there's a case for

either altering the regulations or finding some way of which we can be assistance to them.

MR. CORRIN: I'm at a loss, Mr. Chairman, to understand why pension income is such an important determinant in this program at all. What makes a pensioner? I appreciate that pensioners are very often hard-pressed but why is a pensioner more income-dependent than any other citizen? I don't understand how one can claim that —(Interjection)— we can't have two people speaking at the same time. If the Member for Minnedosa wishes to speak, Mr. Chairman, I'll sit down. (Interjection)— As the member well knows, when in Opposition he will have his turn to do his Estimates.

Mr. Chairman, I don't understand why this government has chosen to make a hard and fast rule dependent on pension income. There are people who are equally poor who are not in receipt of any pension income. So if we're going to extend the program, Mr. Chairman, to people who are down to 55 years of age, it makes absolutely no sense to me that we should do so on the basis of pension income. What the member has said simply flies in the face of logic.

I can say, Mr. Chairman, that the only thing that pension dependency does is restrict the class of people who are eligible for the assistance. So, Mr. Chairman, you can have a case where two people are living in the same block, their doors are facing each other, they both earn exactly the same amount of money; they are both equally poor. One of them receives 48 or 49 percent of his of her income from pension sources; the other one receives 50 or 51 percent. The one neighbour, exactly the same circumstances, the one neighbour is in receipt of the allowance, the other one is out of luck.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I've had people call me and they're wondering what the heck is up. They don't understand who dreamed up this bureaucratic nightmare. This is the whole problem with this SAFER Program, Mr. Chairman, — we're going back to SAFER again — but you know they set it up so that they didn't take into account the Property Tax Credit. So they nullified the effect of the shelter allowance that way. Then, Mr. Chairman, they set it up with pension dependency and they confused it and bureaucratized it again that way. Then they're wondering, Mr. Chairman, how come it's so under-utilized. It's the one program they don't advertise, I guess because it probably costs money. I mean what good is an ad if it doesn't buy you a vote? You actually have to pay somebody a shelter allowance.

So, Mr. Chairman, they've neglected to advertise but people are smart, people aren't picking it up anyway. The word is out. There is nothing about this program that really recommends it to the average tenant. So, Mr. Chairman, can we have some explanation? I don't think that's an adequate explanation. What are we supposed to tell our constituents? What do we tell our constituent who has 49 percent? What does the Member for Minnedosa tell his constituents who have 49 percent dependency on pension income? What does he tell them, Mr. Chairman? —(Interjection)— Well, that's quite an answer, Mr. Chairman, he gives them an arrogance, smug response and I'll put it on record, we have the very best government we've had in a few years.

Well, Mr. Chairman, you know fools paradise again. The member believes because he artfully convinced 60 percent of his constituents to vote for his party in an election in 1977 that he'll endlessly and infinitely be able to con them and deceive them. Well, Mr. Chairman, they're not that stupid. That's why they are not applying for the SAFER Program, they know there's nothing in it for them, Mr. Chairman. So, Mr. Chairman, we're not contending with a serious government that's looking at ways to reform their programming or to streamline it in such a way that it'll be more compatible with people's needs but rather, Mr. Chairman, what we have is a government that thinks it's ever so right, ever so correct, always so precisely proper and accurate in its prognosis of Manitoba's health, ever so endlessly knowledgeable about the needs of Manitobans. That's what we're coming down to, Mr. Chairman, we have a government that really sees itself as being so representative that they need not communicate with the rank and file anymore. So, when you go up North, Mr. Chairman, they've never met the Minister of Northern Affairs. They didn't even know who he was in Cross Lake or Split Lake. They couldn't tell you his name.

Mr. Chairman, this is what we're confronting. I would like to know, Mr. Chairman, why the government won't simply accept the fact that the program isn't working, that it discriminates, that it reflects a bias as between neighbours. Why can't they just accept that and say we'll change it. Why can't they say that we will make an effort to redress a problem that we have created. Why won't they ever improve anything, Mr. Chairman? Why do they have to just dig in their heels and be dragged, kicking and screaming into the '80s. There leader wants to go back to the '50s, that's where he belongs with Ronald Reagan. Mr. Chairman, I can tell you that there will be an election campaign and I can tell you that the people of Manitoba will decide who the best Premier of this province will be. I can tell you with some assurance that there's going to be long faces on members opposite on election night because they're going to find out that the Member for Selkirk is finding a place in the heart of Manitobans. Mr. Chairman, he's doing that because he's honest, intelligent, sincere and he cares about people.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please, order please. I think that we're having quite a bit of banter back and forward. I would request that we allow one member at a time to speak and I think that maybe the next election will be called and then fought rather than starting tonight. Would we stick to the subject please?

The Honourable Member for Wellington.

MR. CORRIN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I would note that if members opposite wish to participate — (Interjection)— Mr. Chairman, the Member for Pembina doesn't think that was parliamentary of the Member for Crescentwood, we don't expect the Member for Crescentwood to be parliamentary, Mr. Chairman. You see it's a question of expectation, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, members opposite have a responsibility to participate in these debates. For four years, Mr. Chairman, they have been sitting

back and I suppose they think that they can just sort of glide it through. Mr. Chairman, they shouldn't be critical of people who want to participate in the debate. They should rise in defense of their policies. Mr. Chairman, that's the real solution. But what do they do, Mr. Chairman? The reality is that when they have a gripe, Mr. Chairman, what they have to do is surreptitiously go out to the press and they have to drive a knife into the back of one of their own colleagues. Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Community Services is wandering around looking a bit sheepish today. I guess, Mr. Chairman, he's wondering how low the Member for St. Matthews is going to stoop in his attempt to unseat him.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please, order please. I have advised the honourable members on, I guess, a couple or three occasions now that the subject under debate is Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation. If I am to read all of the articles under Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation so that the honourable members who are speaking on this subject would understand I will do so. I would ask that we stick to the subject. We have had two hours since 8:00 o'clock. I have allowed a great deal of latitude. I will not allow any more latitude other than the subject under discussion.

The Honourable Member for Wellington.

MR. CORRIN: Mr. Chairman, I will heed your admonition and I will return to the Estimates. I concur with you.

Mr. Chairman, dealing with the SAFER Program I also want to know what this government intends to do about the many immigrant pensioners in this city — excuse me I call them pensioners, people who should be pensioners. If they were in Canada 10 years they would be entitled to a senior citizens pension and a decent minimum wage. But, Mr. Chairman, because they come from countries where old age pensions are not even known they don't qualify. What does the government intend to do to ameliorate that lot, Mr. Chairman? We have people in this city from the Philippines and from Portugal who are completely disintegrated, who receive not one single penny of benefit from this program because they're not pensioners. They can be 68 years old; they can look like a Canadian pensioner; they can act like a Canadian pensioner; they have all the normal indicators that are associated with pensioners but, Mr. Chairman, they don't get any of the benefit of this program.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I've raised this before in the House but we still don't have any response. What is the government going to do about them? Is the government just going to continue to ignore them and pretend they don't exist. I think they're entitled. They asked to come here but they were also invited by our Department of Immigration. I mean they didn't break into the country; they're here lawfully. Once they're here it seems me we should accord them the same dignity and the same programming as everyone else. If they're good enough to work in our factories and they're good enough to help build our economy they should be good enough to enjoy our social service policy and programming as well. So, Mr. Chairman, what will the government be doing — I don't know how many times we've raised this now in a variety of contexts — what will the government be doing about this problem?

MR. FILMON: Again, Mr. Chairman, the member puts together a very impressive sounding but hypothetical argument just as he did for the person with 49 percent of their income from pension who's not receiving the SAFER benefits. I'd like to see that person incidentally but I know that he can't produce that person. (Interjection)— There are none though, that's the point in question.

The people who come here from foreign countries come here under sponsorship, Mr. Chairman, and their livelihood is expected to be looked after and those arrangements are made prior to their emigrating to this country. On the other hand, if for some reason, the sponsors do not live up to their commitments we have a very fine social assistance program in this province that picks these people up and looks after them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (a) — pass — the Honourable Member for Wellington.

MR. CORRIN: Mr. Chairman, I don't know that that's an adequate answer to the problem. It seems to me that people are here and they have to be recognized. A person once . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister on a point of order.

MR. FILMON: Perhaps the member was in conversation and didn't hear my response because he obviously isn't acknowledging the response that I gave.

MR. CORRIN: In deference to the Minister it's possible the Member for Transcona distracted me so if the Minister would be so kind as to offer the courtesy of repeating his answer I will listen more attentively.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, I said that people who emigrate to this country do so under sponsorship, that's part of the immigration laws. They are expected to be looked after in terms of their needs financially by their sponsors. If, on the other hand, for some reason and occasionally, although not often, occasionally it does happen that the sponsors do not live up to their commitments, under those circumstances we have a very fine social assistance program in this province and to our knowledge these people are being looked after under those circumstances, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CORRIN: Mr. Chairman, sponsors are not responsible for people who become Canadian citizens. Believe it or not we're not so paternalistic in this country to continue that sort of approach.

MRS. PRICE: Did I miss anything?

MR. CORRIN: Four years I would say. Mr. Chairman, we're not so paternalistic as to continue and maintain that sort of approach to people when they've been given citizenship status. It's true that people when they come here have sponsors, Mr. Chairman, and I think particularly people who come here on visitor's visas. Having attained landed immigrant status even, I do not believe, that sponsors retain that sort of liability and

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responsibility. So I believe, Mr. Chairman — I know that I'm right with respect to Canadian citizens — federal immigration law does not discriminate against people who have attained citizenship status. I can assure the Honourable Minister that I'm correct on that point. I do not believe that we discriminate against people that we accord landed immigrant status. That is right with respect to visitation and work visas alone.

So, Mr. Chairman, once again I'd reinforce my argument that there is a need and that the government should move to fill it. The government seems to be disposed to say that they want to see evidence; they always want to see evidence. Mr. Chairman, it is not the responsibility of the opposition to dredge and comb the streets looking for evidence of government abuses of government programming or inadequate government programming. A responsible government does that itself and in so doing, Mr. Chairman, they facilitate two purposes. First of all, they better their own programming, and second of all, they safeguard people. I suppose the third thing might be that they improve their own political image if they're so interested and this government obviously isn't.

But, Mr. Chairman, this is a problem. I don't believe that this year is the first year that the Minister has heard about it; I believe that's probably been discussed in caucus because there have to be some members opposite who have people in this situation, just as there have to be some people on the other side who are equally representative I hope of the people, they're elected the same way, who have constituents who tell them about the pension problems with the 50 percent pension requirement. So, Mr. Chairman, I believe that this is an old story. I believe that this has probably even been raised in that caucus room but the government for some reason or other isn't responsible, doesn't care.

Mr. Chairman, I'd also like to talk about mortgage foreclosures. We've talked about that in a variety of contexts this session. We know that in Winnipeg alone we have an increase in the number of foreclosures from an average in 1975 of some 13.2 per week to 1980 where in the first quarter we had 38.9 percent increase. So we know we have a significantly higher foreclosure rate in the City of Winnipeg. We know of course that we have very high interest rates which are effecting a lot of homeowners ability to sustain themselves. I'm wondering whether this government will do anything at all to assist people who are confronting those all time record rates. Does the government plan to do anything at all?

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, it's topic of ongoing discussion in our administration and we are reviewing a variety of different alternatives at the moment.

MR. CORRIN: Could the member tell us what alternatives will be reviewed, Mr. Chairman?

MR. FILMON: No, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CORRIN: Open government is facetiously marvellous, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister on a point of order.

MR. FILMON: Perhaps I was a little too brief. It's a potential topic for the next Federal-Provincial Ministers' meeting. It was discussed at the last meeting . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is not a point of order. If the Honourable Member for Wellington is giving up . . . The Honourable Minister.

MR. FILMON: It was a topic at the last meeting and it's one that will be discussed extensively. At this present time, I will not be in a position to enunciate the alternatives to the member but it is an ongoing matter for review.

MR. CORRIN: I'd ask the Minister whether his department is monitoring the mortgage foreclosure in the City of Winnipeg and whether they will be making any recommendations to the Attorney-General respecting legislative amendments that might assist people who are facing this sort of problem. For instance, would they be extending payment deadlines? Would they be bringing in a debt adjustment bureau or a commission such as we did during the depression? Will there be any attempt on the part of the government to do anything of that sort by way of legislative initiative?

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, we are closely monitoring the default rate and we are reviewing a variety of different instruments that might be used to address the problem but it will ultimately be the Attorney-General's responsibility to make that kind of decision.

MR. CORRIN: I'm wondering, Mr. Chairman, whether the government is aware of how many people who are now applying for public housing support, are victims of mortgage foreclosure proceedings. Does the government have any record of that situation?

MR. FILMON: No, we don't have any exact figures on that. It's something we could come up with, Mr. Chairman, but generally the waiting lists for public housing are going down so it doesn't seem to be adding to a problem.

MR. CORRIN: I was wondering, Mr. Chairman, also whether the government is making any attempt to monitor the losses that are being sustained, the monetary losses that are being sustained by the people who are suffering these foreclosures. We all know, Mr. Chairman, and it is rather obvious that people suffer a certain dislocation and obviously a great hardship on a personal basis when they lose the family home, but I'm speaking directly now to the amounts of equity that people are losing. You know, facing a mortgage foreclosure in the Seventies was one thing; facing a mortgage foreclosure in the Eighties in Winnipeg is another thing altogether and I'd shudder to think what a person facing a foreclosure in a place like Selkirk or The Pas or Flin Flon would be going through, Mr. Chairman.

Let's face it, the market is very very slim and it's very soft for sellers and in many circumstances, Mr. Chairman, it's virtually impossible to even sell a home and I know personally, of several people who have attempted to do so without any luck in the

hope that they could withdraw their equity. I'm wondering what sort of attention the government will be paying to those people who might be losing really virtually all their savings in a foreclosure. Is the government going to be bringing in any sort of legislation that will ensure them against losses or ameliorate their losses?

I've even thought, Mr. Chairman, — I know it's far fetched and it's in the realm of fiction but one has to I guess, stretch the lines of reality when you're thinking of problems of this magnitude — I've even thought of tax credits that could somehow work through the system to protect people who are in this position, so the government would recognize that somebody because of a very very adverse economic climate was in an uncontrollable and vulnerable position and were given some sort of benefit, even it's just a write down of taxes for a year, provincial taxes, so that a person wouldn't have to pay all the tax on their income that year. I know, Mr. Chairman, that people could say well, that's irresponsible and it's their business and why should others subsidize the irresponsibility and hardship of others, but these are hard times.

During the depression we had a Debt Adjustment Board. The Member for St. Johns told me a story about it; it was his first case as an articling student. He successfully argued before the board, a case involving a man who couldn't meet his obligations and was able to extend the payment periods because the board had that sort of jurisdiction. They could extend the due date on a mortgage — well, I'm not sure about mortgages — but in all sorts of other credit instalment arrangements. So, would the government be willing to seriously contemplate a debt adjustment format in order to assist people in this situation, Mr. Chairman? I'll wait till the Minister gets his advice of counsel.

MR. FILMON: Any instruments we are looking at, Mr. Chairman, would be ones that would not interfere with agreements in the marketplace. But I want to get back to that situation where he is suggesting that we as a government, should be in some way responsible for overcoming the adverse effects of the soft-housing market.

Mr. Chairman, that soft-housing market was caused precisely by the kind of action that the member opposite was suggesting earlier this evening. He was suggesting that we just go on merrily building houses and stimulating the housing market into an overbuilt situation such as we had in 1978.

He's now talking out of both sides of his mouth when he's asking us to rectify the problem that occurred because of that overbuilt situation, where the overbuilt housing market caused a softening of the market, caused a depression of housing values, and caused people to be in a position of losing their equity in their house. That's exactly what happened as a result of it and now he's saying, on the one hand we should solve that problem; on the other hand we should reintroduce and compound that problem by forcing housing to be constructed by all sorts of strange means that he has in his mind and cause us to be further into that problem and cause people to be further in danger of losing their equity by further softening the housing market. That's why we don't want to get that situation that he is proposing, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CORRIN: Mr. Chairman, because I made a few concessions and I volunteered them — and they're only concessions to reality — nobody could have taken into account the dramatic out-migration that occurred in this province in the past few years.

Mr. Chairman, part of the problem — and it's a major contributing factor — is the fact that we have lost a lot of people. We have had a net out-migration for several years and that is a fact of life in Manitoba now. Sure, you've got a soft market and people expected the Manitoba economy to continue to be prosperous and I'm willing to concede that builders — builders were continuing to express that confidence even in 1978 — there were 40 more units of single family housing built in 1978 than in 1977; the bottom fell out in 1979 and 1980. Once those statistics on out-migration got out, Mr. Chairman, the market simply softened and fell away and the Minister is just going to have to realize that although we're willing to concede that there were other external forces, that out-migration plays a pretty depressing and debilitating effect on the minds of people in the private sector and people who are making decisions vis-a-vis housing, construction and investment.

So, Mr. Chairman, I'm not trying to have it both ways. I don't think there's anything duplicitous in my approach. I think it's a reasonable and temperate approach. Also on this point, I'm disappointed to hear that the government doesn't want to give consideration to these alternate approaches but there is one thing they could do and that is, they could give some serious consideration to providing homeowners with not only some tax incentives to purchase homes, but also some tax deductions on mortgages. I don't see any reason, Mr. Chairman, why we can't have a tax credit scheme that confers a benefit on the homeowner mortgage payer.

I know that the Clark government was talking about a mortgage deductibility program when it was in office. My party thought that the program should be much expanded and were concerned about the unjust prioritization and ordering of the program that was presented by the Clark government. As I remember, Mr. Chairman, if my memory serves me, we said that there should be a tax credit approach instead of a mortgage interest deductibility approach. So we said that the whole thing should be pinned to a homeowner's income and that on balance, those who are most dependent and needy, should have the most significant benefit.

Now as I remember it, Mr. Chairman, the Clark government was proposing a system whereby people were encouraged to buy the biggest and best house they could afford and then take out the biggest and best mortgage at the highest and best rate and write it off and that, Mr. Chairman, is what happened in the United States, that is exactly what happened in the U.S. When they introduced that program back there — and it's been in I think for about 25 years — it has done nothing to stimulate the housing for lower income people, for working people. It's done a heck of a lot for developers who are selling \$150,000 houses in the suburbs. Mr. Chairman, if this government was genuinely pursuing ways to ameliorate the lot of the homeowner, they would be looking at some sort of progressive form of taxation reform that would either allow a tax credit, which I

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think a tax credit is the most preferable approach, or a progressively structured mortgage interest deductibility program, not one on all fours with the Clark proposal.

Again, this government has done nothing. They've watched interest rates soar; they've watched construction fall apart; they've watched core area housing continue to deteriorate; they've spoken in platitudes about the need to do something but they haven't done anything. All the affirmative positive things that could be done by a government have been undone and neglected by this government.

Mr. Chairman, in just a very short time today, I think we've covered dozens of various options available to government and most of them — I've never heard the government propose them or even propose discussing them — and if the Minister is about to stand up and say that's socialist nonsense or rhetoric well, it was proposed at least by his colleagues in Ottawa. It's like the Bill of Rights, Mr. Chairman, sometimes you have strange bedfellows. On the Bill of Rights I'm in bed I suppose with the honourable member, Mr. Enns.

Mr. Chairman, again I'm not supportive on all four square with the Clark proposals but I see the reason. I know that there's a need for some ameliorating programming. Does the Minister at least agree with me that he should be looking at something, he should be doing something? Can we have some sort of commitment or is this another matter that's under consideration, under advisement, ad infinitum? Is there going to be any program? Let's face it, SAFER with its 2,200-odd applicants isn't going to be much of a record for four years in government. That's really nothing to build an election platform on. A Critical Home Repair Program that's virtually bare bones that's been diminishing every year, as I said earlier, Mr. Chairman, is nothing to go to the people with; a public housing program that doesn't exist, infill housing in the core area doesn't exist.

What are you going to offer the people? — (Interjection)— Good government is a government that cares about people. What are you going to offer the guy who wants to buy his first home and can't cope with those mortgage interest rates? What are you going to offer the guy who's losing his first home, a guy who's destitute, a guy who's going to be out on the streets, lose his life savings? What are you going to tell him?

The Member for Minnedosa goes tsk, tsk, tsk. Well I suppose it's tough luck if you're not a fat cat like the Member for Minnedosa, but he's a bank manager. You know, it's all right if you're the guy who's calling the shots in the bank and you've got a preferred loan rate. But you know, in my constituency we don't have that preferred loan rate. Mr. Chairman, I think there's a member who's going to get his comeuppance.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. The Honourable Member for Minnedosa on a point of order.

MR. DAVID BLAKE: Yes, I've just been referred to, Mr. Chairman, as a fat cat and I'm rather flattered by that term, but I have never considered myself a fat cat. The motion of tsk, tsk that I went is because we've been listening to this diatribe of garbage for about two-and-a-half hours and there has got to be some better way in examining the Estimates of the

Minister's department than sit and listen to an idiot ramble on since 8 o'clock, Mr. Chairman, and say nothing more than he has spoken. I've heard him night after night after night in this Chamber. I think it's ridiculous that the members of the Minister's staff have to sit here and be subjected to crap like we've heard tonight for two-and-a-half hours.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Minnedosa did not have a point of order.

MR. CORRIN: The Member for Minnedosa may prefer to hear crap for a few seconds but, you know, Mr. Chairman, I'm sorry to say that he can't restrict, short of closure, he can't restrict the Opposition's responsibility to examine these Estimates. He may not enjoy it, Mr. Chairman, it may prove embarrassing for his government; they may want to stonewall the Opposition's efforts to get behind and see the truth but, Mr. Chairman, that is the process and that's democracy and you have to accept it. If he doesn't want to be ridiculed and criticized he should get on his hind feet and start talking so that we know what he thinks about and what he feels.

Getting back, Mr. Chairman, I asked a question, I asked the government Minister and I'm going to put it to him again, I'm not on the point of order, but I want to go back to the item, Mr. Chairman. I asked him whether or not the government would consider a tax credit program to help mortgage borrowers. We want to know what they're going to do to help the borrowers. Mr. Chairman, if they don't address that, they're not a government. It's just that simple. That is the most pressing problem of the early 1980s. Historically, that will be the problem that will be remembered. Mr. Chairman, what are they going to do?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. J.R. (Bud) BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, I have a couple of questions, first of all, and then a couple of general comments. On Page 26 of the report, I wonder if the staff could advise the Minister why there's a net loss of \$145,180 on the sale of land for 1980; two, relative to note 15, a note payable in U.S. currency, could he give us the details on that?

Mr. Chairman, through you, I wish to commend the staff of the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation who have continued to deliver housing as best possible under the direction of the government. I'll take exception with some of the policies of the government, but nevertheless, the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation itself, I think that they should be commended for the services that they have done over the years.

One other question I have, relative to the report of the corporation, is on Schedule 3, they show you the Assets of the Sinking Fund and it comes to mind with current interest rates, I see that the bonds that are held are Manitoba Hydro Electric, Manitoba Telephone System and the Province of Manitoba, but the highest yield on those bonds is 8 3/8 percent. So at first blush it appears that the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation is subsidizing the Hydro Electric Board and the Manitoba Telephone System and the province itself by these current rates. I wonder why some of these investments haven't been

rolled over if it was possible. I see one issue is due on the 15th of September this year, yielding 5.25 percent. Perhaps the Minister could have his staff look at those questions.

But reference was made to housing in the central part of the City of Winnipeg, Mr. Chairman, and I want to ask the indulgence of the Committee for a few moments to look at the situation in the inner part of the city. Many of us react to the word "core area"; I detest it with a violent passion. "The core area", I don't like it. Many of the people who have lived in this area for years detest it also, and especially when they refer to Langside Street as skid row in one of the papers.

But Mr. Chairman, briefly, there hasn't been an urban renewal policy in Canada since 1956, when they stopped the bulldozers; the last one that they built was the Lord Selkirk one and everybody said that we can't continue to do it that way, we'll have to come up with something new. Every government that's been in power since that time has danced around and come up with what they thought was part of a policy. With all due respect, the NIP program is exactly that, it's nipping at this and it's nipping at that. If you look at the central part of the city it was, and is, still thought of as Urban Renewal II, and much of the land in there is zoned relative to that old development plan; the city has come up with a new one, but nevertheless much of it is locked, because of the thrust of people to relocate the rail lines.

Now there is extant the Winnipeg Area Transportation Study, which envisaged a Sherbrook-McGregor Overpass of some complexity. As a result of that the spaghetti works which was part of that complex dictated the zoning of the land in that area. No development of the total old Urban II is possible until that whole question is solved. I, for one, albeit that Winnipeg Centre is a constituency of the New Democratic Party, passed a resolution which I was bound by and am still committed to fulfil that obligation until the election is called, they opposed the Sherbrook-McGregor Overpass. But nevertheless, the question is not whether they build the pass or not build the pass, or whether they relocate the lines or not relocate the lines, it is the indecision for the past 20 years that has caused the problem, because no one is going to put money into that area on any large enough scale to solve the problems as far as housing and the rest of it are concerned. That's one aspect of what's happening in the central part of the City of Winnipeg.

Another aspect of it is that in 1969 when the New Democratic Party formed the Government of the Province of Manitoba, they approached the problem as a Provincial Government, not just to solve the problems of people coming into the cities, but they came up with a program which they called the Stay Option, which they tried to slow down the migration into the city; they tried to put rural infrastructures into place; they tried to put jobs into place; social amenities into place; professional services into place; so people would stop crowding into the central part of the City of Winnipeg.

Since 1977, and this is what I fault the government for, is that their economic policy and social policy has been such that we have gone back prior to 1966 and the people are once again coming into the

central part of the City of Winnipeg, because there is nothing for them to do in many of the communities. It is a natural tendency of people to migrate to larger cities. It's a shame to say in our day and age, that one of the reasons that they migrate to the cities is because of the anonymity provided on welfare. In the smaller communities there is a social stigma attached to being on welfare so a lot of people come into the city for that reason. In fact, one of the former members, a Conservative member for one of the northern constituencies, used to brag that we had very little welfare in his constituency, and it was true, because the policy was to roust them to the point that they moved to the cities.

It's easy enough to criticize the lack of housing, but it's not just the housing that is the question. We deliberately, as a government, from 1969 to '77, made the decision that we had to lift the whole province in some of these areas and the Stay Option was part of that lift for the whole province. They did, through the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation, initiate a public housing program which was avant-garde in the country. There comes to mind one community that was built under the aegis of the Manitoba Housing and Renewal, was Leaf Rapids. It got prizes in North America for being a developmental program as far as housing and all of the infrastructures in a modern day community were concerned.

So, Mr. Chairman, perhaps the Minister has the answers to those three questions that I asked him, but I want to just underline, once again, the lack of planning policy relative to the central part of the City of Winnipeg, by all governments, albeit the New Democratic Party started after 1975 to make inroads into it in cooperation with the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation, and NIP to a certain extent, but also one of the other thrusts to say that they initiated was some of the public infrastructures that they were going to allocate. There's a lot of criticism from the Member for Lakeside about the public garage and other things, but there was a program to uplift the area with public infrastructures and housing and the rest of it. But nevertheless, Mr. Chairman, it won't be solved until they come up with a comprehensive plan once again for Urban Renewal II. Move the tracks, leave the tracks; build a bridge, don't build a bridge; a decision must be made and the planning put in place as a result of that decision.

Last year, Mr. Chairman, we were advised that they built a million square feet of retail space. Where did they build it? They didn't build it in the central part of the city; they built it in the suburbs. Mr. Chairman, if people would just look to the south and see what is happening to the central parts of the city in Denver and Los Angeles, New York, there's blocks upon blocks, you'd think wars had gone through these places; and why? Because planning policies have been such, by all levels of government, where it's easier to spread the city out than it is to take care of these problems that I'm referring to at the moment. Until these problems are addressed in that manner they're not going to solve the problems in this government or any other government. It's not going to solve the problems in the central part of the city.

Schoolrooms are going empty in the central part of the city. We're building new schools. The sewer and

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water is paid for in the central part of the city, we're building new sewer lines. There's many concepts which are being tried in other areas, such as the utilization of air space; the building of retail and business premises at the ground level and going up two or three stories with air space for residential facilities.

But all is not gloom and doom. Reference was made to some of the newer Canadians who have come into the area. If a person will go down on McDermot Street east of Isabel you will see that the Portugese people in the area have their own urban renewal program going. They're fixing up the houses. But this problem to the macro or the mega problems is not going to be solved by a NIP Program or a PIP Program or any other program, the only way to solve those problems in my opinion, Mr. Chairman, is to resolve the relocation or non-relocation of the rail lines and proceed.

This isn't something which has just crept in, in the last 10 years or so, this goes back — I forget when the Salter Street Bridge was built, I think it was there in 1936, I know that so it was prior to 1936 — but even in the building of that Salter Street Bridge it had an impact as far as the development of the area is concerned. There was a fourplex on Henry that was built by a man by the name of Jackson who used to be the head of the Carpenters Union in Manitoba, and he built that fourplex as an investment piece of property for his two daughters who were spinsters, who are both dead now, Mr. Chairman. But while they were alive, as a result of that building of the Salter Street Bridge, Higgins became a slum.

Here about five years ago that property was bulldozed down by the city and the cost of bulldozing it down was put on these girls' taxes. The city took the cost off the taxes for bulldozing it but nevertheless this is the problem. It's not only on Higgins Avenue, it's all the way from Higgins Avenue to Portage Avenue and darn near from Arlington Street all the way down to the river, so it's the whole area that's going that way. It's primarily because of a lack of planning policy for the whole area because bureaucrats being what they are — the Sherbrook-McGregor overpass controversy will go on and on and the bureaucrats — that's perhaps a pejorative word in some sense. The people who give advice and their best opinion still think that Waverley Crosstown Highway is the best thing since sliced bread and they're going to keep trying to get it. So until we make a decision one way or another and proceed, that property in there is going to stay zoned for the spaghetti works.

The city and the province, I don't know where the relationship sits now as far as the acquisition of property is concerned. I see in one component where the province was putting about \$200,000 into acquisition of land for housing; nevertheless there was a relationship between the province and the city as far as the acquisition of the land for that spaghetti works was concerned.

So where this property is going to sit has to be decided and if they're not going to proceed with that spaghetti works, then let them replan without it. But the lack of decision, Mr. Chairman, in my judgment is the most important causal factor of the rot of the central part of the City of Winnipeg.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, the member has given us a great deal of good information with which to deal. But I might indicate that what is needed of course, is a planned and co-ordinated approach by all three levels of government, with adequate financing and a commitment to provide infrastructure and go into a variety of programs, whether they be rehabilitation of existing housing, provision of new housing, public facilities, all sorts of co-ordinated efforts. I think that the Core Area Initiatives Program does hold out some opportunities for us in this regard and it's one that I think will enable all levels of government to address this jointly and in a co-ordinated manner.

Reverting to the questions which the Member for Winnipeg Centre asked, I have answers to two questions, and perhaps in discussing the answers with my advisors here I missed the third question. So I'll have to ask him to repeat that if I may, please. But the answers to the questions about the loss that's shown on the land values on Page 26, is that provision for any loss on the sale of land that MHRC has acquired and serviced and made available for development, the provision for the loss where costs exceed the market value that we're able to get for them when they're sold, has to be shown in the current statements.

In this particular case it's for the sale of lots in West Selkirk. We must take the loss when it is recognized and we don't take any potential gain until it's actually made as well. We have a great deal of land on the books that is probably worth more than it originally cost, so presumably at other times this statement will show some gains in land values. In this particular statement there are some losses being shown. I think we've been discussing this evening about the depressed market for sale of land that is occurring and has occurred during the past short while which appears to have bottomed out and is improving, so that we will in all likelihood not only balance off but perhaps enjoy some appreciation in the land values for some of the lands that we have under our control.

The second part was with respect to the Sinking Fund and the investments which are made under that fund. The Sinking Fund as the member probably is aware, is a requirement of The Housing and Renewal Corporation Act under Sections 10(8) and 10(9) in which certain amounts in relationship to advances, borrowings and assumptions of indebtedness of the corporation, have to be set aside under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Finance who then invests that in various instruments and those instruments are shown. You can see that they were bought at discount in almost all cases, recognizing the fact that they were paying a lesser rate of interest than the going rate at whatever point in time they were bought. I suppose that those various borrowings, those various investments could then be converted to other investments but again you'd have to discount them if you're selling something that pays 5.25 percent, you would have to discount it to whatever you could get at market value. So that's a decision that the Minister and his advisors in their judgment would make and it's not something that's within the control of the Housing and Renewal Corporation. I apologize for missing the third question. If he could inform me of it I'll try and get the information.

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MR. BOYCE: The other question, Mr. Chairman, was why on the same Page 26, Note 15 — it's just a matter of curiosity — there's a note payable in U.S. currency in the amount of \$12,766,000. I wondered why this is in U.S. dollars. One other thing, I would ask the Minister to use his good office when he's discussing the inner City of Winnipeg to call it that, the inner City of Winnipeg, the inner core initiatives.

Mr. Chairman, I've been in this area from east of Arlington Street for 45 years and there's an awful lot of people who've been there longer than I have. We have a lot of people come through our area that don't last very long and they make a stink while they're there. But nevertheless we resent very much being referred to as the core area albeit that people get shot with shotguns outside of hotels and all the rest of it. That does not reflect the people who live in this particular area.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (a) — pass; Clause 5 — pass; Resolution No. 40 — pass.

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$32,527,400 for Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Environment; Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation, \$32,527,400 — pass.

Resolution No. 41, Clause 6, Acquisition/Construction of Physical Assets — pass. the Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. WILSON PARASIUK: Yes. Could we just get an explanation from the Minister as to the \$111,000 increase?

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, I think we have finished the MHRC. That No. 6 refers to Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Environment and I'll have to wait till my other advisors arrive on the scene.

MR. CHAIRMAN: They're coming down right now. The Honourable Minister.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Speaker, \$126,000 for air monitoring equipment; \$18,000 for a gas chromatograph; \$18,000 for word processing equipment and \$48,000 for a replacement of various equipment in the Information Services area, that is camera equipment, television cameras and so on.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution 41 — the Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: Yes, could the Minister just explain the word processing equipment, what it's being used for?

MR. FILMON: The intent is to put Information Services on Word Processing equipment, Mr. Chairman, so that they don't have to continually retype and edit material that they are doing in the process of preparing news releases.

As the member may be aware, Word Processing equipment enables one to do corrections on rough drafts and keep going without having to retype the entire thing. It allows for storage, retrieval, correction and adjustment of all sorts of material for editing purposes. There will be a very substantial labour component alteration in this that would make much more efficient use of our time in Information Services.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Clause 6 — pass; Resolution 41 — pass.

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$211,100 for Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Environment; Acquisition/Construction of Physical Assets, \$211,100 — pass.

I would ask the honourable members to turn to Page 31, Resolution No. 36, Item 1. General Administration (a) Minister's Salary — pass.

The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Chairman, I have not had the opportunity to sit in on too much of the Estimates of this department because Health has been going on concurrently in the committee, but I do note that the Minister said that he was willing to consider evaluating press releases to ensure that they provided unbiased objective information, the Minister is quoted in the press as saying that some days ago. Presumably the Minister has had a chance to reflect upon that, can he indicate whether he is going to do that?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I could ask the member to repeat his question; I was just momentarily distracted?

MR. PARASIUK: Yes, the Minister is quoted in the Free Press as saying that he would undertake to at least consider evaluating each press release provided by the Information Services Branch to determine whether, in fact, it provided unbiased objective information. I say that the Minister made that statement some time ago; he has had a chance to reflect upon it, can he indicate whether in fact he is going to do that?

MR. FILMON: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I do plan to do that. I think I owe it both to the Information Services staff to evaluate. I think at that time I indicated that I was going to evaluate press releases and also take a look at what had been done before to see whether there was any indication that we were doing anything differently through the use of Information Services for dissemination of press releases and information. I intend to review that matter.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Chairman, I raised the question, in view of what I heard this morning on CBC, when Roger Newman was commenting on the Information Services Branch and what the CBC people were calling a pay propagandas by the Conservative Party. Roger Newman is someone who has been around the scene for some time, he's been around prior to 1969, he has been around from 1969 to '77 and he's around now and he's had a chance to review things. It was his considered opinion, in the interview this morning, that indeed the press releases being put out by the Information Services Branch had, in fact, become somewhat propagandized. It was his considered opinion, not mine, I'm not saying it's my opinion, I'm saying this is Roger Newman's opinion and you know, you can groan and moan but the point is that I think the Minister should be aware of this if he isn't right now. It was his considered opinion that these are documents that shouldn't be put out by Information Services Branch, but rather

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they should be put out and paid for by the Conservative Party.

Now, when you are getting a respected senior journalist in Manitoba making statements like that, wondering whether, in fact, the staff of the Information Services Branch, who have to have their press releases approved and authorized by the Minister, aren't indeed being pressured into doing things that they haven't done before. I think that's a serious observation; I think it's a serious accusation and I'm glad the Minister will investigate this manner, because when you get people of that experience making statements like that, then I think what you've done is, and I say you, I say the Conservatives, have in fact caused the whole process of Government Information Services to be terribly undermined and I'm glad the Minister will look into that. I'm confident that by the time the House rises we'll have an opportunity to ask him about the substance of his review.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (a) — pass. Clause I — pass. Resolution No. 36 — pass.

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$1,083,500 for Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Environment. General Administration \$1,083,500 — pass. This completes the Estimates of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Environment.

The Committee rise.