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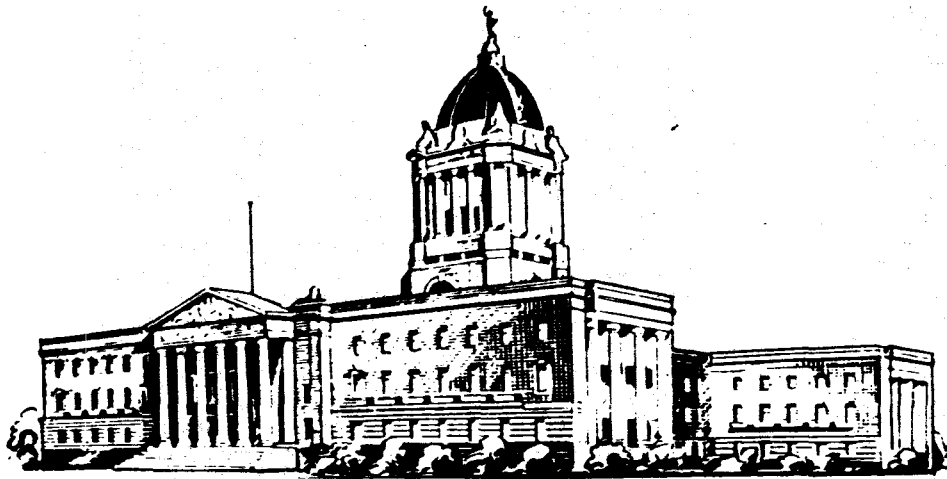


Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

Speaker

The Honourable Ben Hanuschak



Vol. XVII No. 41 8:00 p.m., Thursday, April 16th, 1970. Second Session, 29th Legislature.

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THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

8:00 o'clock, Thursday, April 16, 1970

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're on the Department of Youth and Education, Resolution No. 101. The Honourable Member for Emerson.

MR. GIRARD: Mr. Chairman, I wish at the outset to, like my colleague from Riel, offer the condolences to the Minister, because although I haven't experienced it myself I can well imagine the gigantic responsibility and duties that he faces on a daily basis. The momentous task of looking after a department of that size not only means a tremendous amount of money to handle and spend in an equitable and careful way, but also it means the manipulation of people and shaping the lives of the young people of our country.

The Minister has just dealt with his estimates at the opening in very general terms, and in fact he called them generalities. I was listening very carefully to his talk and I was wondering at one time whether it had been written by the same author as the speech that was given by the Minister of Agriculture when he introduced his estimates. I thought it was very flowery and interesting, but maybe not too much matter. I'd like to deal however with certain aspects that he has mentioned which I thought were very worthy of comment.

First of all, I applaud the effort that's being made in his department to assist students who are intending to go to university and adult education and so on. I was a little bit afraid, because of past incidents, that the tendency of the Minister would be to allocate grants to the university in such a way that tuition fees could have been lowered. I was afraid of this because of prior commitments that had been made and I didn't think really that this was the direction in which the department should be going. I believe firmly that increases in bursaries, increases in scholarships and increases in loans available to students is the proper direction to take for the support and aid of university and adult education. The Adult Education Centre that is functioning in Winnipeg is probably the example of any in Manitoba. I'm not aware that in the rural areas significant adult education centres are functioning and functioning well. However, I'm in full agreement that these ought to be recognized and the difficulty that these people face because they happen to be in academic courses rather than in vocational courses, and being assisted through the federal system of aid is definitely a necessity and it should be supported as he indicated it was.

Student job placement of course is something that we have heard a little about just recently. I applaud the intention of the Minister in this regard and I realize that in the past maybe there was a lack of organization in this particular area. The "catch-as-can" basis I hope will be looked after and I hope will be substituted by something that is constructive, well and just -- just for everyone.

I was very interested in hearing a portion of his speech on the concern that the Minister had for the culturally deprived or culturally handicapped. This is an area that definitely needs very close attention and study. The assistance program that he has indicated that would happen this summer, at Grand Rapids I believe, is no doubt a step in the right direction. However, I hope that it's not intended to be a program that will consider locality as closely as it does in the pilot program. I hope that this will be made available to larger areas of the province and varied areas of the province. There are people in southern Manitoba, as you are well aware of, that need this kind of assistance just as readily as in Grand Rapids and in Winnipeg.

There is a very important factor however that should be considered when we think in terms of these programs, and that is an area that is closely related to the so-called generation gap in our own environment that we live in every day. The objective, the sense of value, the goals that the culturally deprived students, and more specifically those culturally deprived students that happen to be of Indian origin and live on reserve, have as objectives and goals something that is significantly different from the goals and objectives of other parts of the society. I was speaking to one of the superintendents who happens to be in a northern division, and he at one time suggested to me so aptly that one of his students who was quitting school advised him that he was quitting not because he was not achieving well, and in fact not because he was so much out of place, but rather because he enjoyed his way of life better than the rat race that we were trying to shape him for. Their goals, Mr. Minister, are sometimes different and sometimes we might be encroaching on something that might be precious not only to them but maybe to other parts of our society. I've seen many of these people in schools, and especially in Emerson and Dominion City, who were achieving very well academically but

(MR. GIRARD cont'd.) simply faded out of school because of lack of interest and because of lack of interest in the goals that we were setting for them.

I was interested, Mr. Chairman, on a definition that was given in the talk by the Minister last night, and this was a definition of a philosophy that we are embarking on apparently. It might not be new but it is to be extended, and I wish just to quote the statement. It says: "The essential purpose underlying the decision-making rationale that is being conceived is the development of a framework that will permit and encourage sound and realistic detailed planning of curriculum and instruction at the local level without sacrificing those elements of provincial co-ordination and service that have supplied the foundations of our education system in the past and that will be equally necessary in the future to provide the necessary articulation within the system." I hope that this is not all words, Mr. Chairman, because it is definitely true that we must be going in the direction where curriculum must be influenced by local administrators and local school boards, because really this is the important thing to those particular people and should not be centralized. I can well understand that in some areas there must be a centralized influence over curriculum, but as much as possible I think that it should be decentralized.

There's also a philosophic statement made by the CORE Committee that says on the re-organization of secondary schools emphasis -- it emphasized the fact that the educational system must be ongoing, it must be flexible, and centred on the human needs of the students that it is designed to serve. Now you can't really take those two goals separately, I think that they are very closely related and you can't divorce that from local authority. Local autonomy is some thing that must be used if you're going to implement this broad philosophic kind of statement.

I'm not going to mention too much about the relaxation of the regulations regarding instruction of languages in schools. I think it's quite evident that this was going to be -- I think it's quite evident that the steps that you are taking are a continuation and maybe an acceleration, but in the same direction as we were going in the past. I would emphasize however, as I have done before, that this kind of relaxation ought to be done in the name of cultural enrichment of an education program. I think it would be wrong if people were to view this kind of relaxation as a benefit and a concession to ethnic groups. It might well be construed as a concession, but really I look at it as an enrichment from a cultural point of view that is available to anyone in Manitoba and it makes for a broader curriculum. I like to compare this kind of relaxation to the granting, let's say, of piano lessons or of art in a professional way, teaching it in a very professional way to students and students becoming accomplished artists very much as they are more accomplished culturally if they obtain another language.

I think that one area that was underestimated and underrated in your speech, Mr. Minister, is that of the quality of teachers that we must strive to achieve. If we are going in the direction that is stated by CORE, if we are going in the direction that your statement indicates, I think it's self-evident that the responsibility that was once borne by this department, by the inspectors, it will now be borne by the teachers in the classroom and that's where it should be. Teachers must be given more authority and more responsibility and must therefore become more qualified, not only in academic sense but in a professional sense. I can foresee the day, Mr. Chairman, when school teachers will be designing their own course, and when a historian designs his own course there is no chance but that it will be a better kind of course as far as he is concerned, and if his students are as engrossed as he will be in that course I believe that it will make for better education. If we look at it closely this is the kind of system that we have in university, and God help us if we had to design courses for university professors and ask them to teach it because it would be as dull as some of our courses are now in high school.

I'm curious in that you did not mention anything about the supply of teachers. It seems to me that the supply of teachers now is being close to meeting the demand, and my question is, Mr. Minister, where do we go from here? Are we going to concentrate on taking advantage of the supply of teachers to set more stringent requirements and qualifications? Are we going to use this as a weapon to make salary negotiations difficult? Are we going to control the number of teachers that are going to want to go into the profession? Just where, Mr. Minister, do we go from here?

Abolishing the Attendance Branch was a relatively evident kind of step. I think in some regards it no doubt had outlived its usefulness. However, it does present a good number of problems and I'd just like to throw a few questions at you so that you realize that it's not really

(MR. GIRARD cont'd.) as simple as it may seem. There's a question of the Attendance Act. How will that be affected? Will the sixteen-year-old requirement that we have now still exist? Will the regulation in that regard be changed in any way? What about the social security allowances or social assistance allowances that were controlled by the attendance officer? What about the division costs to do part of the work that might have been done by this individual? What about school registers and the grants that are paid on the basis of attendance, regular attendance at school of some of our students?

The Research Branch of the department is a very interesting one and no doubt one that is going to be shaping the destiny and the future direction of the department. I can't help but think, Mr. Minister, that with an ex-university professor and an ex-superintendent in that area that you can't but have a very good crew and it can't but be that a lot of work will be done.

With reference to -- (Interjection) -- I'm going to see if I could possibly do that. Bulk buying is no doubt an economic way, a way of saving money for the people in the administrative area of education. There is little doubt that you will be saving money on school buses if you buy them by lot, but again we must not forget that we're paying a price for all this in any case. You might save a few dollars on the one hand but you're undermining the local authority that existed in part at least. I'm not saying that in all it should be a program that is scrapped, I'm just simply saying that I don't think it should be extended to areas where it's not necessary. I hope you will not find it necessary for instance to buy desks in large quantities or tables in large quantities or items that are used in schools in large quantities so that the people who are using them locally will not have some say into what kind or what description, what size and so on. I think it's important, Mr. Chairman, that local autonomy, at least in some regard, be preserved and this is one of them.

I was a little concerned about the entirety of the speech given in this regard because it seemed to me, it seemed to me to take a direction that was not that of the previous government in this regard. The previous government had placed itself, and I think rightly so, at least for a period of time, in attempting to provide to the students of Manitoba an equalized kind of educational opportunity. I don't think anyone can deny that giant steps were taken to provide an equal opportunity in education in Manitoba. I think that if we look at all the programs that you have spoken about in this speech you will find that most of them are urban-oriented, and I'm not discouraging the programs in any way, but I'd just like to point out that for instance the additional grant to the vocational student of \$325.00 will mean significant money coming into the coffers of urban school systems, the Division of Winnipeg for instance and several others, but if we examine it closely you'll find that very very few schools and many divisions will not benefit at all outside of Winnipeg simply because they are not in a position to be offering a 50 percent vocational course. I again don't condemn the grant, I'm simply pointing out that this is urban-oriented and I think we should be aware that equalized educational opportunity is a worthwhile kind of thing.

I have a few questions with regard to the specialist, the grant for specialists. As indicated, 2,500 students would provide a division with a grant for a specialist. What about the gradation? I know that this will likely come out in the regulations and that if the division has so many above 2,500 then they will be granted an additional specialist. I am asking you this at this time, Sir, because this is the time when the hiring takes place and school divisions really are interested in knowing before they hire just what the grants will be. The same applies to the grants you announced with regard to special education. What about the gradation from 500 students to 1,000 students? How many do you have to have in order to obtain a second grant?

Another question that I would like to raise is that of the co-ordination between the requirements for trained personnel in Manitoba and the training institution. I would like to think for instance that the courses and the enrolments at the community colleges that we have will in some way reflect the needs of Manitoba. I would like to think that all the students who graduate from the community colleges are given employment in Manitoba, but of course I know that I am being imaginative when I say this. I would like to say however that we should be concentrating very closely on co-ordinating the needs of one with the ability to supply in the other.

This brings me, Mr. Chairman, to say something about the system that the university operates under at the moment. I know that it's very difficult to influence an autonomous body such as the university in their policies. However, seeing that we are paying grants to the university, I think that we should attempt to exercise some influences in some particular

(MR. GIRARD cont'd.) direction. I was a little disappointed to find that you felt it necessary to allocate six million of the 11 million increase in the estimates to the university. I think that, as my colleague from Riel said, the public school system is really the guts of education and really the bulk of your increase ought to have gone in that direction rather than in university. I say this also, Mr. Chairman, because I have a feeling - and maybe it's not founded in a great deal of fact - but I have a feeling that really a little bit of efficiency at the university might help a whole lot more than the few additional dollars in grants.

It's interesting to note that we are now subsidizing our students at the university to the tune of about 83 percent, that is 83 percent of the cost to the student, if he were to bear the entire cost of his education, is now paid by the province. Tuition fees are approximately \$425 to \$450 per year per student. It brings about another curious kind of fact, Mr. Chairman, when you consider that 17 percent of the enrolment at the university is non-Manitoban. We are subsidizing students at the university to the tune of approximately \$1,800 per year and 17 percent of our total enrolment, which is I understand 14,000, which means 2,800 or 3,000 students could be from outside of Manitoba and we are subsidizing them with approximately \$1,800 per year.

I don't regret this expenditure but I think it's a little bit unfair when our Manitoba students, for one reason or another, find it necessary to take courses in the universities from which our external students come and they pay some exorbitant tuition fees. I could be more specific. If you consider a case of a student coming from North Dakota to the University of Manitoba, he pays no more and he gets no less than a Manitoba resident, but if a Manitoba resident were to go to the North Dakota University, he'd have to pay two or three times the tuition fee that the North Dakota student would pay and he would get nothing less or nothing more. I think this is an area that could be negotiated possibly. What we would likely need is some kind of reciprocity with the American students very much as we have an inter-provincial reciprocity that looks after this kind of problem.

I'd like to say something, Mr. Chairman, about the transportation system that we have in our rural parts of Manitoba. I've been approaching the Minister about this at different occasions and I'm very concerned about the lack of direction that's been given to the transportation system in the province, and more specifically, I'm more concerned about the lack of clarity in the regulations that should be followed or should be given to the bus drivers. At the moment there is an unbelievable kind of confusion about red lights and signs and divided highways and what not. The Department of Education has provided the school divisions with a booklet which is called, I think, "Regulations with Regard to Drivers", but it deals more with washing windshields and keeping lights clean than it deals with the things that are really of importance. I hope, Mr. Chairman, that something can be done about this before very long and before it is too late. This is a very serious matter. I don't think it should be dealt with lightly. I've discussed it in detail with the Minister and I'm not satisfied that it hasn't been looked after yet.

Just one last item. I don't think it's possible to talk about education without involving some part at least with the cost of education today. I don't begrudge the increase in the estimates; as a matter of fact I expected that they would be even higher. I am a little concerned however with the way in which this money is raised. The cost of education, with the arrangement that has been in existence since 1966 I believe, was that the Foundation Program was designed to provide the students of Manitoba with a minimal kind of education and minimal it was. In 1966 I believe that it would be fair to say that no school division operated at grant only. Now the Foundation Program which says the province will provide X number of dollars, of which 70 percent will come from the Provincial Treasury and 30 percent will come from the general levy, is probably a good kind of system. However, the proportion might well be a little different. If in 1966, Mr. Chairman, it was impossible for school divisions to operate on the grants that were submitted to them by the Provincial Government, it has become much more difficult when you consider the increase in cost of education for them to do so now. The money that was needed over and above the grants of course was raised by methods of a special levy which was provided for in the Act at that time. It has become increasingly difficult for school divisions to operate when they have to get a good amount of their money from the special levy. I'd be very interested to know, and I haven't been able to find out, what exactly the proportion of money expended by the public school system comes from the special levy. However, I would venture to say that it's very considerable.

(MR. GIRARD cont'd.)

Now when a special levy is required to support the education of children on a division basis, the significant factor --- I should say there is really two significant factors that come into play. One is the number of students in that division and the other is the assessment. The assessment per student dictates the difficulty or the ease with which that division will provide education to their children. I'd like to point out that in Winnipeg the assessment per student is approximately \$11,000.00. I understand that in White Horse Plain the assessment is approximately \$6,285.00. I'd like to point out that in the Seine River, the assessment per student is \$3,690.00, which means, Mr. Chairman, that if a school is in need of X number of dollars per student, it will cost Seine River three mills where it would cost Winnipeg one. I'm rounding off the figures, but approximately. In order to obtain a certain number of dollars per student in one division, they will require three times the mill rate that will be required in another division.

I'm not suggesting that this kind of problem can be looked after immediately and I'm not suggesting that it's possible to be looked after at this session. However, I'm suggesting that it's a very urgent matter, and unless it were dealt with one year from now or sooner, I think that we could say that the government is dragging its feet. I know that there's a good deal of information to be had before you work out a solution to this problem, but I think some means of recognition of this problem on a temporary basis could be justified very easily by your department at this time, and school divisions that are experiencing extreme difficulties because of this problem are worthy of special consideration.

Mr. Chairman, I am anxious to hear the comments that the Minister will have to make both on these questions and on others. Just in closing, I would like to say that I have confidence in his ability and I wish him success.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

MR. FROESE: Mr. Chairman, let me at the outset also congratulate the Minister on assuming his duties as Minister of the Department of Education. Likewise, the Deputy and also the Minister's associates in the department and the various agencies that are involved in the Department of Education such as the School Finance Board and I'm sure there's others.

The cost of education is going up and the estimates before us are higher than they were a year ago, quite a bit higher, and this does not tell the whole story as we well know. We know that the special levies levied by the divisions and the school districts back home also increased and that the total increase in cost of education is much higher than is indicated in our estimates before us, and I feel that we as members of this House and the government should take great care that the money is spent wisely and not unnecessarily and that we get as much value for our dollar as possible.

The Member for Emerson I think touched on so many things that I was going to speak on that my whole speech has been disrupted, but I think some of the items wouldn't hurt to be re-emphasized and I'm sure that I'll be mentioning a few others as well.

Tonight I opened the paper and I saw two articles in connection with the Home and School. The Home and School are meeting in the city at the present time and there's articles in both papers. In the Tribune there's mention here and I quote: "Lionel Orlikow, Human Development Advisor for the Government's Planning and Priorities Committee, says the main problem is province-wide thinking with roots that are based on a local level." This is more or less the theme of his article. Then he goes on to say that we have about 100 Home and School organizations in the Province of Manitoba and about 85 of these are in the City of Winnipeg and that these are slowly dying out for lack of support.

The other article is in the Free Press of today as well and it is quoting a Mrs. Boyko. I might read one paragraph here: "In fact in Greater Winnipeg at the Junior and High School level, there is only one Home and School Association and that is at the Jefferson Junior High School and the Garden City Collegiate in the Seven Oaks School Division." So at that rate the Home and School will probably not last too long. Although they state, somewhere in the article that the rural ones are much stronger, you have so few of them. As indicated in the article, there are only 15 according to that.

In my opinion, what we need as far as Home and School is that these have legal status under the Act and that they provide a forum for discussion and also that they take action that would be binding. Unless they have this, I think they're not very meaningful and it will always be hard to keep them going. In the same article they request that grants be made to the Home

(MR. FROESE cont'd.) and School from the government. Whether the Minister has anything in mind in this way I would like to hear from him, because I don't think I find anything in the report about Home and School except for the one that is operating in connection with the Deaf. They apparently are doing a very good job and are provided certain facilities for these people in the School for the Deaf.

Some of the things that I wish to mention here tonight is for one, the Textbook Bureau. I find that the report has very little to say in connection with the Textbook Bureau. I think on Page 35 there's two or three paragraphs here. It describes the Bureau and its operations very briefly and it mentions the sales, the total sales and also the sale of authorized texts, but we as members don't even know whether this is a paying proposition or not. How much does it cost to operate the Textbook Bureau? Can we not get a financial statement from them? I feel that this is essential because we are now talking of going into other agencies, bulk buying, and we haven't even got a statement on the Textbook Bureau and now it operates. How can we assess the department's activities along this line? I feel that it's a must, that we should have a profit and loss statement from this Bureau and just what is there in the way of write-offs.

I've heard some stories of some of the divisions and these come to me from the north. I'm not sure whether the Member for Churchill is involved or whether he knows about it, but textbooks are being ordered in large quantities and then a lot of these are never being used. They are discontinued and here you have a great loss in this way. What is the experience of the Textbook Bureau in this case? I would like to hear from the Minister in that respect about the various texts that are no longer used and whether large supplies are on hand when they are being discontinued. Then too, as far as the rate of markup, what margin is provided? Because if we do get a statement, if there is a surplus we still don't know. I would like to get more details on this in order to check up just what is involved. What about the inventory? How much inventory is there? How large an operation do we have?

The matter of library, the matter of books that used to be sent out to the various schools under the library grant, this I think has changed and I would like to hear from the Minister about that whole program about the libraries, how it's being operated now and to what extent is it subsidized if any by the department. Mr. Chairman, I'm asking these questions about the Textbook Bureau in order to get some information and to assess the situation as to the matter of bulk buying. If we're going to go into bulk buying in buses and what have you and a number of other things mentioned by the Member for Emerson, we should have some idea as to what will happen, because we know that the Department of Education and education in Manitoba is practically, for all practical purposes, a monopoly. You have no -- (Interjection) -- Well, the Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre says a Crown Corporation. I think it's a monolithic system and we have no criteria, we have nothing to measure it up with, how it's performing. We know that the private schools in this province are operating much more economically and they are not spending nearly the amount of money that our public school system does, and yet I think the performance is good. It's certainly nothing that we can complain about.

If the government is going to go into the matter of buying buses, just what is the proposal? Are they going to find out what the total amount of contracts or purchases for the year will be for all the divisions and then go out and tender, or just how will this come about and how will it function? It seems to me that if this should go further than just the buses and if it should go into as far as supplies is concerned, that a lot of our local people back home, the small businessman is going to be hurt. I for one would not approve of such a program whereby we would be hurting the small businessmen in our local communities, if there is such a program. If we're going to go into this in the way of buses, is the matter of building schools also on the program? No doubt if the government gives consideration to the matter of buses then they must have considered other things. Has consideration been given to the matter of constructing schools by the department?

There's one other matter that I think I should briefly touch on and that has to do with the research and experimentation. In going through the report, the research that is being mentioned here is probably more of a different nature than what I would be interested in at the moment. We know that other provinces have spent large amounts of money on research. We know that they have been experimenting for years as well. Just what liaison is there between the Province of Manitoba and the western provinces, or the Province of Ontario, in respect to research, and how much can we gain from these projects that they have been embarked on and have probably completed. Are we really taking advantage from the research and experimentation that is going

(MR. FROESE cont'd.) on in other provinces? I think this is an area that we should certainly look into and it could probably involve large savings to us. I know that some years ago when I was still involved with the trustee organizations, when they had their conferences or conventions - Canadian Trustee Conventions and so on - that certain programs were discussed, and I know that in a number of programs a lot of research work was carried out by the provinces that I am sure could be used in Manitoba and most likely the departmental staff is using this. But I would like to hear from the Minister just what the situation is. I'm sure he can throw light on the matter and probably inform members of the House in this respect.

The Member for Fort Garry mentioned the tax problem, and I certainly had intended to bring forward the matter as well because real estate taxes in the southern part of the province are very very high. You have many quarters where taxes run between six, seven and eight hundred dollars a quarter, and that 75 percent of this is school tax. So you can see the enormous amount of support that is coming from real estate for the support of schools, from real estate taxes, and that with the economic situation that we have it's getting more and more difficult. I'm sure that there are many many farmers that borrowed their money this last fall to pay their taxes, and if things don't improve we can expect more difficult situations this fall. I had really hoped that we would get more relief, more in the way of relief as far as real estate taxation, and I hope that we try and economize, that we try and save wherever possible so that we do not burden the taxpayer more than has to be.

At the same time, I would ask the Minister about increased grants for multi-district divisions. We find that relief is being given to the unitary divisions and I think that we should treat the people of Manitoba alike, that we should not distinguish and divide them into classes whereby certain people would be penalized more than others in the way of supporting education in this province. I do hope that the Minister sees fit that if relief is given to one section that this applies equally to all the taxpayers in this province.

According to the report, the teacher supply position must be improving. I haven't got the figures before me - I know it was stated in the report - I think there were some 659 teachers are receiving certificates as of June 1969. I'm sure this should help the situation. Could we have a more recent and more up-to-date figure, and also a statement from the Minister about the supply situation for teachers in Manitoba and also the matter of getting good teachers. We find that because of the situation that we have in southern Manitoba where you have more of the smaller schools, that these teachers when they come out of teacher training that they've acquired the knowledge or a program that is different than what we've been used to in the smaller schools and you cannot apply as readily. I think this is working a hardship on some of the younger teachers, the new teachers that are coming out of teacher training. They find it difficult to take on the schools which are not departmentalized into classes, graded classes, and just teaching one grade. I feel that we should try and do something for these teachers so that they can take on this job more readily and do a better job and make it easier for them, because they find it difficult to take over. So many of them find that after they've been instructing for a while that they have to change their methods and use different methods than what they've been taught at the teacher training institute.

I would have liked to have had the Public School Finance Board's report. I hope the Minister will provide it for us before we are finished with the estimates of his department because this Board is charged with dividing up the grants which amount to roughly better than \$83 million, which is a very substantial amount, and I would like to get the report and hear from them just how their operations were going and whether there were any special recommendations that they might have.

We know that the University Grants Commission, as has already been pointed out by the Member for Emerson, is taking up a big portion of the increased amount that will be devoted to education from the allocation in the estimates. The increases to the University Grants Commission have been very substantial. I recall that I think when it was set up they had something like 25 million allocated to them; the following year it was 36; the year after it was 43-1/2 and now we're up to 49. This is a very considerable increase. Where are we going here? Where will this end? Have they got a projection as to the next two or three or four years? Is there any projection made of this type? And if so, I would like to hear from the Minister what the future holds in this respect.

I know others have already spoken in this connection with the type of aid that is available to students, university students, and also the matter of tuition fees. I don't think I need dwell

(MR. FROESE cont'd.) on that because questions were already put by the Member for Emerson and others, so that I will wait to hear from the Minister before I put any more questions to him. These were some of the points that I wish to raise on the Minister's salary, and providing I get the necessary answers, I might have some further remarks.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to thank the honourable members, in particular the Member for Emerson who I think contributed very much to these discussions. I have a great deal of respect for the Member for Emerson because he is a professional in the field, and since I am a layman I have to admit that when he speaks I perk up and listen.

I believe I had just completed some remarks in reply to the Member for Churchill and I would like to go back to some of the questions put to me by the Member for Fort Garry, I believe it was, who had some remarks to make on my estimates, and he pointed up correctly that in his particular municipality, Fort Garry, there has been a substantial increase. I've read that in the newspapers the same as he, and I would point out to him that in other areas however the increase has not been nearly that substantial and in some areas has been negligible. He says an answer has to be found because the burden is intolerable, and I don't doubt that in some cases this may be valid, but the money must be raised and if we simply seek another avenue through which the money can be raised, it's very possible that some people who today are complaining about high taxes may complain because if we shift the tax burden to some other method of raising money they may pay as much and perhaps even more than they are paying today.

In the final analysis, the answer really is to seek equality. So it's wrong to assume that all property owners pay too much for education, because I think we have to look at the plight, if you want to call it that, the financial plight of all people and not just property owners. In this regard we did move, this government did move and it's wrong to say we didn't, we did move in the field of social development. The Department of Health and Social Development moved very drastically. We moved just a very few months ago in the Medicare field where we shifted a substantial tax burden off people's shoulders and we saved them \$100 in premiums which would be far more than if we had tried to tinker with the Foundation Program and perhaps relieve a few mills here and there. It wouldn't have added up to \$100 per family as this did.

The Member for Fort Garry had some interesting comments to make on the question of summer jobs. He correctly points out that this is a perennial problem, it's a permanent problem that's here to stay and it isn't going to just disappear overnight. He suggests a Manitoba Peace Corps working with under-privileged and it has merits. In a sense this is the program which I announced during my estimates, where we are going to try to take some children, ages 10 and 12, from the city inner core and take them into the Cranberry Portage Residential School where the program won't simply be a camp but it will be an enrichment program, where these children can be exposed to things which probably they mightn't in their own environment be exposed to - music, art, certainly outdoor activities, athletics, but the whole field of cultural activities which they don't too often get and which puts them at a disadvantage. I believe the Member from Emerson mentioned the same problem.

The Member for Emerson hoped that it wasn't my intention to consider the Pelican Rapids experiment as something that should be localized but that the same type of approach should be used in other areas as well. And I agree with him. This is an experiment and a pilot program, and on the basis of this we will certainly -- or findings, we'll expand it because this is certainly our aim and objective.

He mentioned the generation gap and the cultural differences between people, and that not everyone has the same goals in our society, and of course I agree with him in that regard. It is not and shouldn't be -- it should not be the job of a school, of an educational system to simply turn out gingerbread cookies all stamped in the same mould. It's deadly; it's deadening; and it doesn't work. So certainly the curriculum must be flexible enough so that it can meet the needs and the aspirations of the students who are in the public school system, at the same time recognizing that they have to live and work in a society which is a highly industrialized society and so we have to try and bridge that - make it possible, let's put it that way - to make it possible for them to develop culturally as well as technically, to develop as individuals so they can get the personal satisfaction to which I think every person is entitled to, and at the same time to fit into our economic life so that they can both contribute to and gain

(MR. MILLER cont'd.) from the benefits of an affluent society.

And I certainly do agree with him when he talks about the extension of languages to be taught in the school system, that this is aimed at cultural enrichment, because there is no doubt in my mind that the ability to understand another language, to be able to read in another language, to be able to see things from another point of view makes for a society that is more considerate, more temperate and a much richer and livelier society than what we might otherwise have.

And I endorse the idea that we should put more emphasis on such things as art, music, ballet. Certainly these things are all desirable goals. Of course I'm sure the Member from Emerson recognizes the problems, and if he heard the Member from Rhineland speak a minute ago, his concern is about the cost of education and this is not something we can shrug off. There is no doubt that the cost of education is high, so we have to try to balance between the best type of program, the most efficient program in order to achieve our desired results in a most efficient and economical way.

The Member for Emerson stresses the fact that in the final analysis it's the teacher that counts. I think this was the message he was trying to give to me, that we have to give the teacher the authority, the power to be able to cope with curriculums, to be able to be flexible enough to meet the needs of his or her particular students, and we can't dictate from a central office how one should teach, what one should teach, the time that they should teach and all the other details. I certainly subscribe to that, and it is not our intention to centralize in that sense.

When we talked in terms of centralizing, I talked in terms of the kind of centralizing that would bring about economy. That's why bulk buying I think can do this. I can't accept the argument that bulk buying might save money but that it would be undermining local authority. Frankly, the purchasing of a bus, or even a desk, I don't think is that essential to the local authority of a Board nor is it that meaningful to a Board. With all due respect, I think the trustees should become more concerned, as I think many of them are, with the contents of the curriculum, with the standard of teachers they have, or the program in the schools rather than the material things that go into the schools, and if we can achieve savings by bulk buying then we'll move in that direction. Now I don't intend to go to the extreme, and I'm not suggesting that we run out on a provincial basis and buy crayons and chalk and paper and so on, I'm talking about the costly items where savings can be meaningful if bought centrally rather than to have each community go out and buy two buses or three buses.

The Member for Emerson was concerned about the fact that the Attendance Branch was being phased-out and he asked the question - he asked a number of questions really - of how it was going to operate and would it affect the present regulation regarding compulsory school age, and the answer is No. He asked about the question of family allowances. At the present time the Division Attendance Officer will be responsible for attendance -- is going to continue to be responsible for attendance just as he is now. There's no change in that regard, because the divisions now have to appoint attendance officers and provide remuneration for them in any case. They will continue to do so, but the difference is they won't have to report back to the department as they do now and we won't have people on staff who are running around putting little cards in little filing boxes keeping tab of students as they move from school to school within a division. I think the Attendance Branch served a very important and useful function years ago. I don't think today under the division system that they are as relevant or necessary. And I might point out to the member that a letter was sent out to divisions seeking their views on this, and the overwhelming response was that they didn't feel that the Attendance Branch needed to be continued.

You know, one other point perhaps that the member might have had in mind - I didn't catch what he said in detail - but I think he asked would this affect in any way the method of paying grants which a division would earn, how would they be arrived at? They're the same as they are now calculated on the basis of half-yearly reports from the division, so there's no change in that regard at all.

He is concerned that the vocational technical grants which I mentioned yesterday for vocational courses and business education courses will help only Metro Winnipeg, I think is what he said, or perhaps some urban areas. Well it may help them, but I would like to point out to the member that the composite schools being built now are being built in the metropolis of Swan River, that major urban centre, and they are certainly going to benefit from this. The

(MR. MILLER cont'd.) other metropolis of Selkirk, Manitoba, to the north of us, they're going to benefit from this, and of course the capital of Manitoba, Dauphin - if you remember a former Minister of the Crown who felt that perhaps that's where the capital should be - Dauphin will certainly benefit from these grants as well. But in addition to all that, I can tell him that there are forty divisions plus Mystery Lake that are offering at least one - at least one; in many cases more than one - at least one 50 percent vocational course which will be eligible for these new grants, so that I think his fears about it being a Metro-oriented grant structure are not entirely correct.

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MR. GIRARD: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister would accept a question at this point?

MR. MILLER: By all means. --(Interjection) -- I just gave him leave.

MR. GIRARD: When you speak of the forty divisions, is it possible that this is Industrial Arts courses you are referring to rather than 50 percent Vocational course? It seems to me that forty divisions offering 50 percent Vocational courses is a very high figure.

MR. MILLER: Okay, I'll give you chapter and verse. Now this is in the Vocational courses - Winnipeg, St. James-Assiniboia, Assiniboia South, St. Boniface, Fort Garry, St. Vital, Norwood, River East, Seven Oaks, Lord Selkirk, Transcona, Springfield, Agassiz, Hanover, Red River, Rhineland, Morris-MacDonald, Interlake, Evergreen, Lakeshore, Portage la Prairie, Midland, Garden Valley, Pembina Valley, Beautiful Plains, Turtle River, Duck Mountain, Swan Valley, Inter Mountain, Pelly Trail, Birdtail River, Rolling River, Brandon, LaB . . . Valley, Antler, Turtle, Flin Flon, Western, Dauphin-Ochre, Frontier. These people -- this is the business education and the vocational courses. They do offer -- at least I say they won't earn their full grants, perhaps, because depending on the number of courses they offer and the breadth of the program, but they will be entitled to grants under this grant formula.

Now the member also enquired about the community colleges and he hopes that the courses offered at community colleges will meet the needs of Manitobans, and I can tell him one of the reasons the Review and Development Branch is being strengthened and why we now have a man at the head of it, is because we want to at all times keep abreast and evaluate the programs themselves. So that we can measure in advance what the business community may require; so that we can be ready when needed, rather than respond after it's too late, we also have the advisory boards which sit in the colleges, or advisory college administration, on the courses that should be operated and how they might best be amended or revised from time to time so they can keep up with the changes that take place in the field that they're teaching. Now certainly it's my hope, just as it is his, that all the graduates of the community colleges will remain in Manitoba. At the same time, I'm sure he recognizes that some will of course move on to other provinces and of course we can't prevent them from doing so; on the other hand, this should not prevent us from trying to give them the best training possible while they're attending our schools.

Now he raised the question of greater efficiency at universities, and he did preface his remarks by reminding me that these were autonomous institutions, and I'm glad he did, because although they are under my aegis, I suppose, they are at arm's length to me. They work through the University Grants Commission and I'm not about to try to tell them or order them how to operate. The universities are very jealous of their autonomy and one doesn't barge in and tell them that they are being inefficient or they're spending too much in this area or that area. They work through the University Grants Commission. Their meetings are held with them. They have to satisfy the University Grants Commission as to the requirements and the University Grants Commission then refers to the government the budget that they feel the university requires for the year that is being considered.

Now he pointed out the inequity of Manitoba students who go to North Dakota and pay high fees whereas a North Dakota student coming to Manitoba would pay the lower fees for Manitoba, and I suggest that perhaps reciprocity can be achieved. That's possible; I don't know whether it could be done. But he does say there is reciprocity in Canada. I don't believe there is. I think universities generally in each province go their own way, and what fees apply in Manitoba have no relationship to what the fees are in Alberta or Saskatchewan. The universities set their own fees. Our students from Manitoba going to Ontario pay Ontario fees, and vice-versa. Now if there is reciprocity I'm not aware of it. Perhaps the member from Riel could enlighten me as to standard fees being charged by all universities for non residents. I am not aware of it.

The member also brought up a point that he's brought up to me quite regularly and I must admit that he's consistent and persistent in the matter of the regulations governing school buses and he feels that I haven't moved quickly enough. We are, as you're probably aware, intending to add another light on the buses; this is a stop sign which will light up, so hopefully it will be more visible and easily discernible by drivers and they will stop. The problem he poses is one of, I think, driver education. By driver education I don't actually mean bus drivers, I mean drivers generally - and perhaps including bus drivers. But, you see, it's unfortunate that school transportation and the bus transportation for children runs counter and operates counter

(MR. MILLER cont'd) . . . to what normally is done elsewhere. In the city, if you take a bus and you get off and try to cross in front of the bus to cross the street, you're taking your life in your hands and you just don't do it. You wait for the bus to pull away and then you see the oncoming traffic from both sides. The motorist, the driver, has a chance to see you and you cross when there's a break in traffic. With the school buses there's a difference. They pull up, the children get off and cross in front of the bus, and I don't doubt that it's dangerous and it's dangerous because it's so different and people aren't used to that; and it's dangerous in another way, I feel, because we're teaching children and training them to do something which, as they get older, they aren't do. They're taking their life in their hands if they do it anywhere in the City of Winnipeg. The answer obviously lies in either changing the method of disembarking; if that's not feasible then perhaps a much better and more effective education for the motoring public so that they will learn to respect the school buses and will stop. The problem, as it relates to divided highways, it will still be there in any case because I can't see how they're going to stop if they're coming from the opposite direction on a divided highway. I can tell him, though, that I've discussed this with the Minister of Transportation and I hope we can come up with some sort of program which the Member for Emerson will be pleased with, and at least he'll feel we're trying to do something to meet this problem.

Now the Member for Emerson made remarks which echoed in my ears as being very very similar to remarks that I have made. There's only one correction I want to -- he referred to the Foundation Program as coming into effect in 1966; it was 1967 actually -- that was the first year of operation of the Foundation Program -- and he makes the point that the lower assessed areas are disadvantaged, because under the special levy they can raise so much less money. I might point out to him though, of course, that under the Foundation Program, the whole purpose of it -- and I give credit to the former government for this -- was to attempt to equalize throughout the province and --(Interjection) -- Oh, it has happened in some areas -- so that in some areas -- the Member for Emerson mentioned that Winnipeg assessment per student is \$11,000, the Seine River is only \$3,690, so there's obviously a discrepancy there in the ability to raise money. But, on the other hand, I think he must also recognize that there are some school divisions where about 80 to 85 percent and maybe more of their entire costs are covered by the Foundation Program because their assessment is so variable. What they get from the Foundation Fund is far greater than, let's say, the City of Winnipeg, which pays perhaps 66 or 67 percent but only gets about 29 or 30 percent, so that the lower assessed areas, the poorer areas, are recognized in the sense that they are getting a far greater measure of support, and this was the purpose and this is an attempt at equalization, because it was recognized that areas that did not have the assessment couldn't possibly, on their own, provide the education that was required.

Now, we come to the Member for Rhineland who covered the estimates I think right from beginning to end and posed a few questions. He wants efficiency for tax dollars spent but he's not sure that he's happy about central purchasing, because although that may save money it may affect some local businessman in the home town, and so he's questioning on the one hand whether it's a good idea to be efficient and yet interfere with some local business, and he also quoted from the Home and School Convention which happens to be being held in Winnipeg right now, which I attended over the dinner hour, and deplored the fact that there's only one Home and School in junior high or senior high in all of Metropolitan Winnipeg, and I'm delighted that that one happens to be in my own constituency; and Mr. Chairma, this is a matter of concern. It isn't just that the Home and School is perhaps not at its peak of popularity today, but what does concern me, as I think it concerns all, and the tenor of some of the views made this evening, the fact that we are perhaps losing on one of the most essential facets of the educational system: the local participation by the people most directly involved -- the parents and the pupils; and I'm seriously looking at a proposal whereby perhaps junior high schools, and certainly high schools, should have advisory councils consisting of perhaps four teachers -- and I mean teachers, not administrators, but teachers, four pupils and four parents. I think this is perhaps, if this is the only way, perhaps we have to look at some way to revive the obvious gap that's developing between the school system and the parents, and sometimes the students too. It's, as I say, something that I've given some thought to and perhaps it can be done on a voluntary basis in the schools themselves. I will certainly encourage this sort of action if the schools wish to take it, but on the other hand it may even be that a year from now I may feel that perhaps it should be brought in as legislation.

(MR. MILLER cont'd)

The member posed a number of questions to me on the Textbook Bureau and they were so detailed that I'd like to take them and answer on another occasion when we get to that part of it in the estimates, because there were some details which I'm not sure that I have with me.

He did question the research and experimentation that has been going on, and I think he realizes has to go on, but he questions what liaison there is between provinces; and I can tell him that there is a liaison and hopefully the liaison will be improved - but there is a liaison. The Review and Development Branch of the Youth and Manpower is certainly one which is working very closely with the federal authorities, with other jurisdictions. The Review and Development Branch under Dr. Hemphill is basically concerned with the Manitoba aspect of it but I know that he is in constant touch with other provinces and we are getting information from all the provinces just as we are in turn supplying them with information, and I recognize that what the member had in mind was trying to save a duplication of effort, and this is my goal too and I'm certain that this is the direction that will be followed by the department.

The member asked about multi-district divisions and since there are some changes in the grant structure he feels that we should recognize them with more money, and I'm afraid I can't go along with him on this. The multi-district divisions cannot earn the same kind of grants as unitary divisions because the grant structure is geared to a unitary division; it's geared to a type of school system which the multi-districts do not provide, and the whole purpose, really, of the '67 Foundation Program was to encourage and to create the unitary divisions, so for the present I'm afraid I can't go along with him.

He asked me for the Finance School Board Annual Report and I regret to say that it is not ready. It may be ready next week, I don't know; but as soon as it is I can assure him I will bring it into the House and table it at that time.

Finally, he raises the question which I think has been raised by other members: university costs are going up and where will it end? And I can't give him an answer. The Universities Grants Commission has only been - I think it's in its second year of operation, and I think in their Annual Report they make reference to the fact that they are trying to sit down with the universities and come up with some meaningful long-range projections. By long-range, I mean three to five years. It is an area of our educational system which is absorbing a great deal of our funds. On the other hand I'm not kidding myself, and everyone I think in this House is aware that these costs are not going to go down as more and more people want to avail themselves of the facilities of the university. Whether they be on a full-time basis or through night-time courses or part-time courses, people today want to up-grade themselves. They are seeking better education; they are seeking to better themselves both for cultural reasons and for reasons of employment, and when you have a society such as ours where people have to be retrained two or three times in a lifetime, it's obvious that the educational costs will continue to rise simply to meet the growing demand on them, not only by young people but by adults as well.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I may have missed some questions. I've made a note of them and I will deal with them as soon as I can get the detailed answers. I have them with me but it would take some time to dig them out, and I'll certainly reply to them when I get down to the section dealing with them in the appropriations.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would mention to the Minister a question that he said he would answer a few days ago concerning the Political Science or History program relevant to the lowering of the voting age. It seems an honourable member asked that question.

MR. MILLER: It seems an honourable member who is in a position where he cannot ask the question because he's in the Chair did ask me the question and ask that I respond to it. He asked the question about what are we doing about preparing the 18-year-olds for the vote, and I have to say to the honourable member that I appreciate his concern but I can assure him that we are trying to redevelop an appropriate program at the high school level. But I'd also like to point out to him that I think his fears are somewhat ungrounded, because I think when we gave the vote to the 18-year-olds we didn't give it to them on the expectation that the day after tomorrow we would immediately have to introduce some special programs for these 18-year-olds because they knew nothing. I think we gave them the vote because we felt that they were way ahead of the adults politically and in the knowledge of what's going on in this world, and surveys conducted in other areas, in the United States in particular, have indicated that young people 18 to 21, in that bracket, are usually more up on what's going on on many

(MR. MILLER cont'd) . . . relevant issues than are the adults in our society, and they are in many cases more generally acquainted with our democratic process and the system under which we operate, because there has been a change since we went to school. The classroom is just one facet of an education for a young person today. It's only one of the means by which people are educated. I suggest that television is having, and will continue to have a greater impact on the education of our young people than what we do in the classrooms; that communications have broken down the walls between people, between countries, between societies, and that our young people are absorbing it from very childhood. So that, although I agree that there has to be some attempt made at the high school level particularly to perhaps deal with the mechanics of our political process, I'm not as worried about the young people being completely in the dark because they may not be getting a certain course of studies as we did in Civics when I went to school, and I think, as I say, the communication media has brought our young people to a point where they are far ahead of us when we were their age.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. G. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, I'm sorry I wasn't in the House all the time, but did the Minister intend to answer the questions that I had posed him before 5:30?

MR. MILLER: I did.

MR. G. JOHNSTON: I'm sorry. I'll read Hansard tomorrow and probably respond. But Mr. Chairman, I would like to draw to the attention, some of the serious problems that were referred to in the rising costs faced by school boards throughout our province, and the Member for Fort Garry dwelt at some length on the problems in his area. I would like to show the Minister just how serious this problem is becoming and I quote from the Portage School Board - and I can tell you this, Mr. Minister, the Chairman of the Portage School Board has given me the authority to say these words, and it is really serious. He's saying in effect that if the present level of taxation continues where school boards, his school board has to pass on to the municipality the extra cost by special levy, there is a danger that these following programs will be cut out. If increased grants are not forthcoming there's going to be a reduction of services in the following fields: for example, kindergarten, home economics, vocational courses, remedial reading, industrial arts, occupational entrance, specialist teachers which would include languages and guidance. And I might say, if the B and B Commissioner of this province was in his seat, he would fall out of his seat if he were to be told that the teaching of French could not be carried on because of the level of taxation and the lack of adjustment in teachers' grants. This year alone, in the Portage School Division, there's an increase of \$562,000 of which \$499,000 comprises the difference between teachers' salaries and teachers' grants, and I'm surprised that the Minister has not dwelt at some length on this problem because if this problem is in one school division, I'm sure it's in pretty well all of them, and to say well, we can't do that much about it at this time, I find surprising - shocking, maybe, is the word. Shocking is the word; that we are going to have to cut back on these services which have been considered to have been services that should be supplied and have been accepted and are wanted by the taxpayers of the province. And I would like to know what the Minister has to say about this. I'm sure he's had representations from school boards across the province where they've pleaded with him to say that we want a fixed mill rate, we want to know where we stand, and then when it goes beyond that, then it becomes a provincial responsibility. I would like to hear the Minister's comments in that regard.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

MR. FROESE: Mr. Chairman, I briefly wish to come back to one or two points. The Member for Portage has just raised the seriousness of the situation in his area. I mentioned the farm land taxation in my area and I was not being facetious at all. We have quarters of land that are very highly assessed and the taxation is very high. I mentioned six, seven, up as high as eight hundred dollars per quarter, and when you have, \$1.25 wheat or 50 cents for a bushel of oats and if you can't even sell it, this means a large crop just to pay for the taxes, and I'm really afraid that if the economic situation doesn't improve and if school costs are going to increase the way they have been over the last years, that farmers are going to lose their land by default because they won't be able to pay the taxes, and we know what happens if they can't pay their taxes. The land is sold and this way the people will be losing their life savings, the savings that they have made over their lives and invested in their particular holdings. I think we should not just slide over these particular estimates because the Education estimates are the ones that have been growing probably the most rapidly of all the departments. This and the

(MR. FROESE cont'd) . . . Department of Health, those are the two that have been growing, I think, out of bounds. It seems as though we have no control and certainly one of the reasons why we lost that control is the reason that we centralized, that we took away control from the local level and there is no longer any incentive left at the local level to economize. This was done through the unitary system that was brought in, first the division system and then the unitary system, and I think this has a lot to do with it. I, too, feel like the Member from Portage that we can't just let things ride another year and just wait and see. I think we should do more than that and, as I pointed out, I asked for some projections as far as the University of Manitoba is concerned, or the Universities Grants Commission.

What about the Department of Education itself, and the province as a whole, as the educational expenditures? What is in the offing? Will expenditures continue to increase the way they have over the last three years, or what can we expect? Is the government going to exercise any controls in education expenditures in this province, and if so, along what lines do they expect to bring in controls if they are being brought in?

There was one other matter that has been of interest to me, and probably I'm not referring to it properly when I refer to open housing as far as the schools are concerned - these larger type classrooms. Could the Minister tell us just what does this mean in the way of increased number of teachers required? Does this not require many more teachers for the schools in this province?

Then, too, and maybe I'm assuming this but I tend to believe it and I'm sure I've discussed it with some of the teachers, not only in rural parts but in the city, and I feel that this program is just supporting the lazy teacher. The one that doesn't want to exert himself, he can hide behind the one that really applies himself, and since this is a joint effort I think the one that is really exerting himself and tries to accomplish something will have to work for the others that are not applying themselves the way they should. I feel that this program has left much to be desired and I'm just wondering what other provinces have experienced in this respect. What research has been done or what experience has been gained from other provinces? Could we hear from the Minister on this because I think this is important, because I think this was an increased expenditure for the province and I don't think it will bring the results that some might believe.

Oh, before I sit down, the matter of technical schools. We've heard the Minister mention that the new schools are being built at Selkirk and Dauphin. Are there any further ones planned and how soon can we expect one for southern Manitoba? I know the previous government mentioned that some time sooner or later we would be in line, and I do hope that this new government should certainly not do less than the previous one was going to do, so when is southern Manitoba in line for a technical school?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Riel.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, the problem which the Leader of the Liberal Party has brought up here, I think ties directly in with the point I've been trying to make about the reduction in the grants to the public school system, and the Minister has twice now indicated that he's not all too clear what I'm saying when I say that the Foundation Program has been reduced by four point some million dollars as a result of the reduction of one mill, and I'm sure that he's really not quite as unaware of what I'm saying as he's letting on, because it seems to be reasonably clear that -- perhaps it's not clear to the majority of the people on the government side but it's all too clear to the people who have been in touch with their school boards, because what is happening is that the only way the mill rate is in any way retaining itself to small increments is in areas where the assessment has gone up; and in areas that have been hit with the large increase in mill rate, it's due to the fact that the assessment probably hasn't gone up in those areas as much as it has in others.

Now, the Foundation Program - and this is repeating again - the Foundation Program being made up with the 70-30 split, 30% from the Foundation levy and 70% from the Provincial Treasury, means that for every dollar that is put in from the levy there's two and a third dollars go in from the government, so when the Minister announces that the levy has been reduced by one mill, which he has indicated amounts to \$1.8 million, this means that the province has been able to draw out \$4.2 million out of the program. Now the 1.8 isn't that critical because it's like taking money out of the left-hand pocket and putting it back into the right. It's going to go back on special, the way being made by the decrease on the Foundation levy, but this doesn't account -- there's no way that the \$4.2 million can be made up in a similar manner except that it is transferred on to local property taxation, and I'm sure that

(MR. CRAIK cont'd) . . . this must have been crystal clear to the government when it made this decision because what it did, in effect, was reduce the increase to the public school system from some eight point some million dollars in the estimates to the increase that is shown of \$4 million, with the result that, as I indicated before, that the increased grants to the public school system are roughly four percent, and this is in contrast to the necessity to be making increases that run from eight to ten percent if you're even going to try and stand still. So, as a result of this, it's pretty obvious that there's no other solution but for the school boards and the local government to be in deep problem, and this is surfacing at the present time to the extent that the Member for Portage la Prairie has indicated that school boards are finding themselves in the position of actually cutting back on services. So what has really happened here is that, although other areas appear to be receiving equitable treatment in the distribution of funds in the Department of Education, and the Minister has come out with some very worthwhile programs with regards to aid to children with learning disabilities programs, and diagnostic centres, and some of the others that he has mentioned that are all too valuable, the great, great overwhelming fact remains that the system in general is taking a beating as a result of this unusually low rate of increase of grants to the public school system. Now if I'm wrong in that, I'd like the Minister to refute what I said.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, perhaps I might start with the last speaker this time. I thought I had explained, but perhaps he and I are not on the same wave length. He's simply saying that we resorted to some gimmickry; we took the money out of the left-hand pocket and put it in the right-hand pocket.

MR. CRAIK: I'm just asking you to take it back.

MR. MILLER: Well, I suggest to you that if you take it from the left-hand pocket to the right-hand pocket or vice versa you end up in the same way. Last year the government raised the percentage from 65% to 70%. In effect what they did was they dropped two mills off the Foundation levy, and this year we dropped one mill off the Foundation levy.

MR. CRAIK: But Mr. Chairman, if the Minister -- if we could get to that point there. The only way you can reduce the Foundation levy and maintain the input of the Provincial Government is to change the proportion. The only other variable you have in the whole Foundation system is to change the grants, and all the Minister had to do in this case to keep the money in the Foundation program, that additional 4.2 million, was to change the grant structure.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, the point is this; that the Finance Board found itself in the position of a surplus in 1969. Now they decided - and I think correctly, because that's within their power to do so - that they should eliminate the debt that's been sitting there for a considerable number of years, approximately just under a million dollars, over 900,000 I believe it was, and they would also apply \$800,000 to the 1970 levy, because this was surplus money, so you had the combination of the \$800,000 and the increased assessment which my friend keeps referring as if it was an abnormal increase in assessment - and I pointed out earlier, the increased assessment is very much in line with other years. In 1968 it was 4.8%, in 1969 it was 4.3, and 1970 it's 4.4, so to suggest that the increase in assessment now has created the problem, I suggest that it's very much in line with the pattern that's been established over the last three years. It wasn't abnormal at all.

Now I'm not saying for a minute that boards aren't faced with a problem of supplying education in Manitoba. This isn't just a school board problem, it's everybody's problem, but they happen to be the administrative body looking after it, and I quite accept the fact that in many instances people are finding it difficult, as the Member for Rhineland pointed out, the Liberal House Leader pointed out, are finding it difficult to pay the taxes which the education system requires. But I have to repeat what I said before - the money has to be raised somehow; and to simply say fix the mill rate so we know where we stand, well the school board may know where it stands but the people of Manitoba won't know where they stand any more than they do today, because the tax will have to be raised in another manner, and the same people who today are faced with an increase in property tax may be faced with an increase in perhaps the sales tax, and it may be as unpalatable to them in that form and perhaps even more costly to them in that form depending on their circumstances. So the aim is equality. They're not going to just wish away the cost of education. And as I have to say to the member from Rhineland - do we have projection? Do we know how much higher it's

(MR. MILLER cont'd) . . . going to rise? And I can't answer him, in all honesty. I can't tell him that it's going to drop . . .

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, would the Minister, before he leaves that point, would he tell me that the statement is wrong, that the move on the Foundation levy allowed a decrease of over \$4 million from Provincial Treasury and if you equate it to what's happened to the special levy, it means 2 and 1/3 mills.

MR. MILLER: No, I just don't follow that arithmetic. I'm sorry. The only arithmetic I can follow is the fact that the Finance Board had a surplus. Now they could have -- sure, they could have kept that surplus. They could have retained the debt that they had, and they could have put it into the program by injecting more money, by enhancing the Foundation Program, instead of which they did it in reverse. They simply dropped the levy on the municipal taxpayer by one mill. Now in some cases, that -- in every case that one mill was a saving to the taxpayer. That one mill was a saving to the taxpayer whether it's imposed by the school board or imposed by the province through the Foundation levy. It's still one mill no matter how you cut the cake.

Now, if I might just complete my reply to the Member for Rhineland. He poses the question: is there no end to this? I have to be honest with him and tell him that I can't foresee, nor can I stand here and tell him in all honesty that there's going to be an end two years, three years from now. I don't know. The educational costs simply reflect the needs of our society, and if people want it and if people need it, and if we're going to keep pace with the rest of the country and the rest of the world, then we're going to have to provide an educational system so that our children can fit into their communities so that they can earn a living, so they can live a satisfying life. Now on the other hand, of course, he wants to know when we're going to build the composite school at southern Manitoba and he's well aware that is a very costly venture, but I'm not going to hold that against him. I can tell him this, that studies are being made with regard to other technical vocational schools in southern Manitoba and elsewhere, and it is the intention of the government to proceed as soon as we can get the necessary information so that we build them in the right places, and that they will be set up in such a way that they will serve regions, not just a particular division, but they'll be available on a regional basis to people living in an area. And there can be therefore students sent in from different divisions into a central area who want to avail themselves of those particular facilities.

He asked the question about open areas - open area classrooms - and does this mean more teachers. I suggest to him it doesn't mean more teachers. I suggest also to him, and I know that this has been successful in other provinces both in Europe and in North America generally, it's in line with the present thinking of breaking from the rigid patterns of fixed curriculum, of fixed methods of teaching. It makes possible for continuous teaching in the schools, a continuous program, so the children can develop at a normal and a regular pace to suit their abilities so that that student can go ahead at a faster rate, or a slower rate if they're unable to compete, and I think it gives far greater flexibility to the school system.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Vital. I think we're running out of time but . . .

MR. JACK HARDY (St. Vital): I wonder, Mr. Chairman, if I might ask one question of the Minister. Can the Minister confirm my interpretation of some of the comments that he made that in effect the government is not going to make any contribution towards the cost of education and that this is going to be borne by the property owners?

MR. PAULLEY: Mr. Chairman, I move the Committee rise.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well I guess we'll hear that answer tomorrow. Committee rise. Call in the Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has considered a certain resolution and has directed me to report progress, and asks leave to sit again.

IN SESSION

MR. RUSSELL DOERN (Elmwood): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Kildonan, that the report of the Committee be received.

MR. SPEAKER presented the motion and after a voice vote declared the motion carried.

MR. SPEAKER: It is now 10:00 o'clock. The House is adjourned and will stand adjourned until 10:00 o'clock tomorrow (Friday) morning.