

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, May 26, 1978

Time: 2:30 p.m.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY

SUPPLY — EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

MR. CHAIRMAN, Mr. Warren Steen: We have a quorum, and when Committee rose last night we were discussing the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation. At that time I indicated that there were three persons that were on my list to be recognized as speakers. They are the Member for Transcona followed by Lac du Bonnet and Fort Rouge.

The Member for Transcona.

MR. WILSON PARASIUK: Mr. Chairman, I am wondering if the Minister can indicate whether there has been a change in policy in the determination of rents in either senior citizens housing or low income family housing?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, there has been no change in policy. The Board of Directors of the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation are continually taking a look at the rent scales that are charged in other provinces and all parts of Canada. In Alberta they work at a 25 or 27 percent base and up, across the board. Ontario has a sliding scale that gets up to close to 32 percent. At the present time ours is a sliding scale; it starts at 16 percent but it averages out at approximately 22- $\frac{3}{4}$ percent; there's really nobody paying at the low level because of the incomes at the present time.

One of the reasons the board is having to take a look at the rental scales at the present time is in the negotiations with the Federal Government. The Federal Government have been fairly firm in their position that on their new programs, in our discussions with them, any new buildings, any new projects, must be at a base of 25 percent, and that we would operate, or try at their request, to raise our sliding scale up gradually, so that we will not have had a harsh effect on people that are presently in it.

At the present time I, and other Ministers in Canada, are opposing this. As I said — I think three weeks ago I was quoted in the paper and I mentioned it to the press — we are opposing this because we do not want to have two scales in Manitoba. We don't want to have one for all the people that are in the new buildings, and one for the people that are in the present buildings, but we would agree, with the Federal Government, on trying to move up gradually to the 25 percent across the board or average, because we are running presently at about 22.5 percent. Now, if we did that, the rents — anything the board has even considered at the present time — the average would be achieved by the rents going on the higher income level of the public housing area. And that's the extent of the discussion on rents at the present time, but as far as any change in policy, no, there hasn't been, and unless the Federal Government insists on what they are requesting there probably won't be.

MR. PA are SIUK: Mr. Chairman, I understand that theretwo ways of determining the actual rent within the sliding scale of 16 to 25 percent, and that is that the rents can be determined by the Winnipeg Regional Housing Authority on the basis of yearly income which is determined by income tax statements, and the other way of determining rents is by taking the monthly income, a person's monthly income for the last month . Those two ways of determining rent have been in existence for a period of time and in the past it was the general tendency to determine the monthly rental on the basis of last year's yearly income. I think this is done primarily because people in public housing, often are seasonally employed and their incomes do in fact vary tremendously on a month-to-month basis or on a seasonal basis.

Now, I have had a couple of instances where people have contacted me, indicating that there may in fact have been a change whereby the monthly rental is being determined on the basis of the monthly income for the last month. Is this in fact correct; is this the practice now of the Regional Housing Authority?

MR. JOHNSTON: My staff informs me that if there is evidence that the monthly income is going

to work out greater than what the previous year's income was, they base it on a monthly basis.

MR. PARASIUK: I think that may in fact create some difficulties. I have had one particular instance where, because of that change and because this person had one good working month — this person having a heart condition and in a very strenuous line of activity — this person had a very good month, went in with that monthly income statement and on the basis of that monthly income statement — in a seasonal type of industry as well — had the monthly rent adjusted from \$134 a month to \$393 a month, which just staggered the person. I then checked into it and found that this person will now have to bring his monthly stubs in on a monthly basis to have the rent adjusted. If his rent goes down in the subsequent month, he can bring the stub in and there will be an adjustment.

Now I think the problem with that is that this I think is going to be administratively inefficient. If you've got 7,000 people or 7,000 units being rented, and if you're making monthly adjustments on the rental, I think you're going to increase the paper work tremendously.

Secondly, I think that if you can try and determine what a person's yearly income may be, reasonably between the two — that is the tenant and the renter, in this case the Winnipeg Regional Housing Authority — you can establish a stable monthly rent. That family or that individual then knows what the stable monthly rent will be and can budget accordingly. If the rent is going to escalate by as much as \$200 or \$250 within a month, I think you're going to create tremendous budgeting problems for the tenants and secondly, you may in fact create a disincentive to work. I think that this is especially true with respect to seasonal work, so I'm hoping that the Minister will look into this, and look at the extent to which this will in fact do that, and come back and indicate to us whether in fact this is the case, it's being done.

I think one other aspect, if I may, Mr. Chairman, this person's first response was to think that he was being forced out of public housing, and I think that that would be tragic if tenants are getting the impression that somehow people are trying to squeeze them out of the public housing, because yesterday the Minister talked about the possible bad effects of really ghettoizing public housing. And I think that this would be tragic if those people who are working in seasonal occupations, whereby their incomes do vary tremendously, if they get the impression that they are being forced out, they will look elsewhere, and they will leave, and then you will be left with only those people who are on welfare or only those people who aren't really working at all left in the public housing. Then I think you'll create a real ghetto, I think it's important to try and keep a proper mix in the public housing complexes.

So I think that this over-reliance on the monthly method of determining rents can in fact create some very bad aspects within the public housing program.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, I will undertake to have it looked into. If the honourable member would send me a memo regarding that particular case, I will have it looked into for him as well.

The statement he makes that we should be having a mix in public housing I can agree with, and I think we all do, but certainly we have to keep in mind exactly what the member said. The housing that is owned by the province is there for people in need of that housing. I think we found, and the previous government found, that sometimes there were people that were in need that weren't in it and some people that maybe should be looking elsewhere were in it. Those things will happen at any time, but I've undertaken to look into it. I have a note here that the rent is established for a full year based on the best evidence available at the time the rent is reviewed. If income decreases, rent can immediately be reduced to reflect current income at the request of the tenant, that is part of the arrangement, but as I said, I will have it looked into.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: The second area of concern, Mr. Chairman, is that yesterday the Minister indicated, and I didn't have a chance to look at Hansard because we don't have a transcript, indicated that the average subsidy was \$350 per unit. I don't think that that is what he meant, and then later he went into some other numbers, and I'd just like to get confirmation from the Minister that my numbers here are correct. You are saying that the average subsidy for low income family units is \$208 a unit, is that correct?

MR. JOHNSTON: Yes, split between the province and the federal government.

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MR. PARASIUK: So that means that the provincial share of that would be \$104 per unit — that's the average for all the units that are in the low income families housing.

MR. JOHNSTON: That is correct.

MR. PARASIUK: And that the average subsidies per unit for the elderly is a gross — is it \$104.00?

MR. JOHNSTON: In the family senior citizens housing in the rural it's \$153 and in the city it's \$126, split between the provincial and federal government.

MR. PARASIUK: Is there any reason why it would be higher in the rural area than it is in the city area? I would have thought that if you had housing units built in the rural areas, possibly the land cost would be less and you might be able to have a . . .

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, Mr. Chairman, I am informed that the larger projects are more economic than the smaller projects of 12 and 18, which are more common in the rural areas.

MR. PARASIUK: So that means then that although there might be some, what could I say, negative characteristics to some of the large projects that were talked about yesterday, there could in fact be some benefits to building units of a sufficient scale so that your operating costs on a yearly basis would be less. I know that my colleague, the Member for Brandon East, I think will have something to say on that later with respect to some of the sizings that were put into place in some of the communities that the Minister talked about yesterday when he said that there might be some vacancies, although I don't think the vacancies actually exist because the housing hasn't been actually made available for occupancy yet. But if you take the \$126 monthly subsidy on a gross basis for elderly units, that means that we require a subsidy of \$63 per month for elderly people, to put them in the accommodation, which is, I think, a very low price to pay. And although I am in agreement with the approach that I think is being continued by the Manitoba Housing Renewal Corporation of providing a mix of rental accommodation, because although the Minister indicated yesterday that there will be subsidies to some individuals in private apartments, I think that was already in existence last year. I think there were people living in apartments, in ARP apartments, who were getting a deeper subsidy through MHRC and were consequently in accommodation of that type. Is that correct? Has that program already been launched?

MR. JOHNSTON: The program has always been in place, Mr. Chairman, and the subsidy on units owned by others only, we have 1,834 units at a cost of \$1,764,487 which averages out to \$80.17 average subsidy, which shows a very great saving over the government-owned buildings and by the way, that figure is both, 1,834 in both family and senior citizens, so it has very definitely been shown that the cost to the government is much less when we're subsidizing in units owned by others.

MR. PARASIUK: I think one of the things you have to bear in mind would be the quality of the respective units. I don't know if you have any documentation indicating what the quality of the private units that are presently being subsidized is; square footage comparisons, that type of documentation.

MR. JOHNSTON: I don't have it, Mr. Chairman, at the present time, the square footage of the units, but I would certainly hope and I am sure that we are not paying rents for substandard type of accommodation.

Just one correction, Mr. Chairman, the member stated that the overall subsidy was \$350; that's not the overall subsidy, that's the average cost per unit of public housing of which we have an average income which I gave to him, which is split by the Federal government and ourselves.

MR. PARASIUK: Okay. I'd like to pass on to some other people now but I'd like the Minister to assure us that he would at some time this afternoon or possibly on Monday, take us through a program by program update of the programs of MHRC. If you look at the annual report there is a program description for each of the programs: Public Housing on Page 2; Assistance to Non-profit Groups on Page 4; and continuing on, the AHOP Program; the NIP Program, and I am wondering whether. . .

MR. JOHNSTON: They're all still in place, presently. . .

MR. PARASIUK: Well, I was wondering, you know, I was just serving notice. I'd like to let some of the other members get a chance to ask some of their questions and I will be raising this later on. I'm just serving notice to you and your staff that I would like to find out what the status of each one of those programs that have been indicated in the Annual Report of 1976-77 is at the present stage and what the Estimates are with respect to the fiscal year 1978-79. Those are the Estimates that we are talking about right now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The next person on my list is the Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, yesterday we heard the Minister indicate to this Committee that he has not yet received approval for some of his new policy announcements, and therefore it puts this Committee in somewhat of an awkward position, to honestly review the program for the next twelve month period of MHRC. We are caught in the anomaly of a Minister before the Committee that doesn't have a program. He thinks he has one; he hopes his Cabinet colleagues are going to approve it sometime in June, at least that's my impression of what he said. It has been reported in the media that he hopes that by June, sometime this year, he will know whether he has some policy statements to make. So that puts this Committee in a very awkward position to deal intelligently with this year's program as far as MHRC is concerned. It seemed to me it would have been much more logical for the Minister to not have appeared before this Committee until he had approval from his colleagues for his program. And I would like to know why that was not suggested; why that was not done that way, so that we would be in a position to debate the new policy of the new government. All we have to date on the table are possibilities of doing this, that, and the other, but a whole lot of criticism from the Minister on what had been done in the past, and surely we didn't assemble here in Committee to approve a Minister's Salary for the purpose of criticizing the past policies of MHRC. He may do so if he wishes, but to balance that off he should tell us what he has in mind. What are the new policies or the programs of this government for the next twelve month period for which he is asking some \$19 million — is it? — so that we could be in a position to properly debate the program?

But, Mr. Chairman, it seems to me that this is another one of the new government's Estimate fiascos, coming into Committee unprepared, not even an opportunity for the opposition to express its dissatisfaction on the Minister's Salary because this Minister had to have his salary approved, Mr. Chairman, by his own colleagues. It's probably a new record, Mr. Chairman, I don't recall — at least in my twelve or thirteen years — that a Minister's Salary was approved only by his own colleagues in Committee. This Minister has that distinction this year, Mr. Chairman, perhaps it's a new landmark for the process of government and the consideration of Estimates as presented by this new government. So I take a great deal of objection, Mr. Chairman, to the procedure.

We don't have a program. The Minister hopes his colleagues are going to approve some of his ideas and we will know sometime in June what those are, or will be. But we are supposed to sit here and approve nearly \$20 million of expenditures. That is not, in my opinion, the right way to proceed with respect to business of government not been done so in that way in the past, Mr. Chairman. The Minister is in a position where he may not receive approval from his Cabinet colleagues for his tentative proposals, so he has now put his Cabinet colleagues in a position of embarrassment if they don't back him up; he also puts himself in an embarrassing position if they don't back him up. It opens up a division within his own Cabinet Committee. That is also a very unusual procedure, Mr. Chairman. I don't believe that a Minister enunciates a program that he hopes his Cabinet colleagues will approve of if he's working within a Cabinet team situation. I think you announce programs after you've had Cabinet approval, so I find that very strange. We're going to have the spectacle of the Minister's program not being accepted, or the spectacle of the Minister having enunciated certain ideas, hamstringing his Cabinet colleagues who don't want to embarrass the Minister by not going ahead with the program. That's the kind of situation we have before us.

So, Mr. Chairman, I merely make those observations so that the Minister hopefully would not come back a year from now as unprepared as he is this year.

With respect to specifics, I would be interested to know, Mr. Chairman, what the Minister's intentions are with respect to the land banking program in the Selkirk, East Selkirk area — both West and East Selkirk. What are the intentions of the government with respect to either of those two projects? Also, I would like to know just what is happening with respect to the senior citizens home for the community of Tyndall; whether that is in the program this year or whether it is not — just where that particular application sits at the moment.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, I would just read the last paragraph of my statement that I made

— these programs that I mentioned that we're working on. These programs have approval in principle from MHRC's Board of Directors, and the staff are now developing the working guidelines and it would be hoped that I could announce details to the House as soon as they are available.

Mr. Chairman, I don't see that there is anything wrong with the MHRC staff working trying to develop new programs as far as housing is concerned in the Province of Manitoba. As a matter of fact, I could go back to the files and dig out recommendations to the Board and to Cabinet and to Management Committee that were put forward by the staff of MHRC and the Board of MHRC over the past years, and there were numerous recommendations made that I have studied. I thought some of them were very good and they are all being analyzed. Several of them were programs that are in place in other areas that could be the use of, a different use of CMHC funding with the province. So it doesn't really bother me to say that the government as of the present time is looking at new programs.

Our thrust, as mentioned and as I said before, is to try, and create a situation where people can be, can receive help from the Provincial Government and as much as possible in other accommodation that is not owned by the province. We find that it is less expensive to the province and people can live where they want to live and these things can be done. There is no question about it.

The other problems that are involved with the owning of the public housing are numerous. They are numerous all over the North American Continent. The fact that they are tearing down public housing units in the United States and building new ones on other property by private developers, in consultation with people that have lived in them, is happening. Many of the units, it is doubtful that they will last fifty years, some of them, and all of these things have to be taken in consideration.

I have no qualms about saying those are the things that we are studying. Regarding the programs for the fiscal year of 1978-79, I can only refer you to the report that you have in front of you and if there is any lines in that report that you want to know what the figures are for the coming year or what is being done on it, I will be able to give you those figures.

The other thing that I would say is that on the Salary, it seems to be something that is bothering the honourable members on the Opposition side. Last Thursday night or a week ago last Thursday, there was a motion made for Committee to rise. It didn't pass. Both the Honourable Member for Morris and I were sitting here and we were quite willing to sit here and at any time could have been questioned on our Salaries under that item. —(Interjection)— Tuesday night, thank you. At that time when the motion for Committee to rise was defeated, the honourable members of the Opposition left. They had every right to stay if they had wanted to and ask me any question they want.

Mr. Chairman, regarding the programs, many of the programs that we have in our bulletins are all available. We are trying and are working to present new programs on housing in the Province of Manitoba.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. EVANS: Excuse me for interrupting, Mr. Chairman.

On a point of clarification or point of order, if you wish. If I heard the Honourable Minister correctly he said there was a motion to rise and the motion was defeated in this Committee. I wonder how that could be legal or within the rules, because we understood, for instance, last night that when we were about to have a motion put by the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet, that you, Sir, indicated that we would have to go into the House and have the vote. So how could you have had a legal vote on that matter in this Committee Room on Tuesday or whatever day it was.

MR. CHAIRMAN: To answer the Member for Brandon East on that particular subject, I am informed by the Clerk that for the past three years we have had votes conducted in this Committee as well as the Committee that is sitting in the Chamber. We have been operating under that pretense. The House Leader for the Opposition and the House Leader for our particular side were both under the impression that if there were ever votes taken that the whole membership of the Committee of the Whole would be called in by the ringing of the bells. What we have been doing for the last three years is sort of operating perhaps illegally ' not intentionally. I am sure that the member who has chaired this Committee in the past three years and has been chairing the Committee in the House thought that those that were present at their particular Committee could therefore vote on that particular motion. The two persons I mentioned, the two individual House Leaders, are of the opinion that if a vote takes place it should include all members of the House. This is something

that has been sent to the Rules Committee and will be properly clarified. The rules were just not clear in the past and I started off as Chairman of this Committee operating under the intent that those that were present in this Committee Room could vote on such a matter.

I am told that at the next Rules Committee that this thing will be properly clarified, but the two individual House Leaders have come to the agreement that we should never from hereon in, until it is clarified, have any votes in separate Committees, it should be the Committee of the Whole. So in the past I obviously had been operating in error.

The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. EVANS: Well, Mr. Chairman, just on the point, it is true there have been votes taken here, but also, if my memory serves me correctly, we have also left this room and have gone into the Chamber and we have voted — the last few years. Now I don't know whether it was a particular motion to amend a bill or as opposed to a motion to rise, maybe that was the distinction. I don't know what the distinction was.

MR. CHAIRMAN: To the Member for Brandon East, the Clerk tells me that in the past the votes that have been taken from this Committee into the House have usually been votes that were held over to the following day that occurred after 10 p.m. at night, where we couldn't have a division.

MR. USKIW: Couldn't have a negative vote.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Or have a negative vote, as the Member for Lac du Bonnet says. So we have been operating uninformed for the last three or four years in this Committee, since they had the split committee, sort of in an ad hoc manner and that there has never been any clear set of rules stated and that such a thing could take place.

MR. EVANS: Mr. Chairman, at any rate the matter is to be clarified and I personally would support the idea of going back into the House for votes. On the other hand, there is a problem too. I would suggest that if the other Committee rises before we do in this particular room and there is a vote called, such as Committee rise, I don't know how we can go back into the Chamber and vote expecting everybody, expecting the whole House more or less to be available for that vote.

MR. CHAIRMAN: On that point we would be, if the Committee sitting in the House were to rise and take off for the day and we were still sitting, then we are the Committee of the Whole, and if we had to have a vote then we would have to go back in there to conduct the vote and then, I guess, proceed back into this room to carry on with our business.

MR. USKIW: We would logically stay there to carry on.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Likely. As the Member for Lac du Bonnet says we would logically stay there and continue on with the business because it would be a vacant Chamber.

This is the drawback to the two Committee system. Obviously when it was initiated, all the problems that would be faced by it were not thought of at that particular time, and we are still going through a growing and learning process.

MR. EVANS: I'm wondering then, Mr. Chairman, if that is something else that might be clarified by the House Leaders by some agreement, that is, the question of voting after the other committee has risen, but if it is understood that we shall rise or that we shall not sit any later than the other committee, then there is no problem, I suppose. But if we do decide to sit beyond the other committee

MR. CHAIAN: No, to the Member for Brandon East, I am led to believe that there is nothing wrong with this committee staying beyond the time that the committee in the House rises, or the reverse situation. The reverse situation is more often the case.

MR. EVANS: Well, at any rate, it seems to me then that it would be useful, Mr. Chairman, for the House Leaders to get some agreement on this matter, that is, whether a vote should then be taken if one of the committees has risen, or if that vote should also be held over to the next day.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Clerk informs me that he has been asked by the Government House Leader that he place that subject material before the Rules Committee at their next meeting.

MR. EVANS: Well, I don't want to take any more time, Mr. Chairman. I don't know whether the

Honourable Minister has some answers and/or whether the Member for Lac du Bonnet has some more questions. I have some, but I would be pleased to be put on the list and I will pass for now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, if the Member for Lac du Bonnet is through for the time being questioning the Minister, the Member for Fort Rouge has patiently been waiting, and then the Member for Burrows has indicated he would like to be next.

The Honourable Minister responsible for Housing.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, to answer the member's question on Tyndall, there have been 12 units built in Garson, which the staff felt would be quite adequate to take care of both the Tyndall and Garson areas. We are suggesting that Tyndall still would like to take a look at the elderly persons, that we would work with them on the new Federal Program that has not been finalized, but we are sure is coming as far as non-profit is concerned, which would take up a lot of the people who could afford those type of accommodations — I'm sure that there is going to be many people interested in the new Federal Program with some participation from us. And if there are people that need assistance in that unit, MHRC or the province will be very glad to look at that particular person who needs assistance in that non-profit unit.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister is in a position to deal with the land banking question at this point?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, there is not anything being done on East Selkirk. There's been no discussion on anything to be done on East Selkirk to my knowledge by the board, nor have they requested the staff to be looking at something on East Selkirk at the present time.

I believe it was to be a satellite city, and quite frankly we're not prepared to go ahead with that right now, anyway, or to look at too much development in that area.

As far as West Selkirk is concerned, that is one of the pieces of property that was turned over to Leaf Rapids Corporation. The piece of property has been developed — there's still work to be done, but very close to being finished — the lots will be marketed in that area. We have a problem at the present time in that the lots will be probably be more money for a 33-foot lot in West Selkirk, than a 50-foot lot in Winnipeg, and costs of that particular project are very high.

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, yes. Since the government has no particular policy or intent with respect to development in East Selkirk, is it not reasonable to simply return the property back to the original owner, and save the province a few hundred thousand dollars in expenditures, since they don't intend to use the properties anywaynd since the original owners were not willing people with respect to releasing that land in the first instance?

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, I have to make an apology to the honourable member. He asked me in the House, I think it's close to a month and a half ago, and I told him there was nothing being done regarding the expropriation , because it hadn't been brought to my desk. But I am informed by the staff that the board made a recommendation that they contact the owner's lawyers regarding the property in East Selkirk with the idea of discontinuing the expropriation, and make an agreement to take it back as satisfactory to both parties, but I understand that we have not had any correspondence from his legal people.

MR. USKIW: Just on that point, Mr. Chairman, is the Minister indicating a preparedness on the part of himself and the government to release the property back to the original owners if they desire to take it back?

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't think the board would have recommended that our legal department make contact with them if they hadn't had the desire to want to negotiate that piece of property back or to drop the expropriation. When we hear from his attorneys or his legal people regarding his desire to have the property back; if he is interested, I am sure the board will be interested because of the request that has been made to negotiate it back, and quite frankly, as the Minister, if it's recommended to me that it be negotiated back, I would agree with it. **MR. USKIW:** Yes, Mr. Chairman. With respect to the properties in Selkirk, the Minister indicated that the lots are going to be somewhat expensive, and I'm wondering whether he can elaborate on that for the benefit of the committee as to the costs of the lots and why they should be any more expensive

than lots in Winnipeg.

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, Mr. Chairman, as I said, on a square foot basis — maybe that's a better way to put it — on a square foot basis, the lots are more expensive than property in Winnipeg is per square foot, so that the problem that we are going to have in West Selkirk is that they are 33foot lots, and to my knowledge we have had one person interested, according to the Member for Selkirk his is work being done by Leaf Rapids, and I am the Minister in charge of Leaf Rapids we have had some indication from some house builders that they might be interested.

CMHC is not interested in working with any of the contractors regarding that piece of property for development. Selkirk is not, regardless of what anybody says, short of accommodation. There are houses in Selkirk now but if somebody wants to buy one of those lots, they are going to be available to them but they are certainly not going to be as economical as they should be.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman' can the Minister give us the price of those lots and if they are unreasonably high, the reasons for that?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, at the present time you have me at a disadvantage. The Leaf Rapids Corporation, I believe, comes up in a different area and I don't have information here regarding the lots in West Selkirk. That piece of property was turned over to Leaf Rapids Corporation by MHRC and they have been handling that one and the one in St. Boniface.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, with respect to the Tyndall situation, has the Minister discussed the present policy or decision with the applicant, namely the R.M. of Brokenhead? Are they aware of that decision or have there been discussions making them aware?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, I mentioned that we would suggest to the R.M. of Tyndall the new non-profit program of the Federal Government that I must say we are quite enthusiastic about if we could just get the finalization on it. I can say to you that I don't think. . . In fact, it is public knowledge, people are telling me about it, so I can tell you that the non-profit program under 15.(1) of CMHC is going to be a program that is upgraded and which will be a real benefit. They are saying to non-profit organizations that they will guarantee the loans up to 90 percent, and they will write the interest down to 1 percent. They will pay the interest, except for 1 percent, if they loan 90 percent of the money. If they loan 100 percent of the money from CMHC, their interest rate will be written down to 2 percent, which puts the non-profit people into a tremendous position. They are not controlled by any type of examination on income or anything of that nature and it is something that we quite frankly are waiting to get at. In fact, I think that the amount of money appropriated, when we finally know from the Federal Government or it is finalized, I don't think will be anywhere near enough because I can see many non-profit organizations wanting to move in this way.

The senior citizen doesn't just necessarily want to live in a senior citizens' housing because of funds, he wants to live there because of the group of people of their own age and they are living together in a smaller area and they are not taking care of a big house or running up and down stairs. Our particular qualifications are such that their assets in many cases are too high. We can see people having a house worth \$30,000 or \$35,000 if they sell it and put the money in the bank, the interest they will make on that will be considerable and they will be able to move into the non-profit type of housing. We in the province are working with the Federal Government to come up with our participation in it.

Certainly we would be looking to maybe subsidies for people in an area that do need help. We would be able to give that non-profit organization, that person a subsidy in that particular building. There is no question that it is a scheme or a program that the Federal Government is introducing that we like.

So that is what we would, as soon as we can, we would refer to Tyndall. I might say that there is one program in Manitoba going ahead under the new CMHC funding and it has had to have special approval from Ottawa to go ahead because the CMHC indicated to these people who were ready to go ahead under the old section 15.(1), and they said, wait, because there is something new coming. And the people waited but they also had a contractor waiting and sub-contractors waiting, so the CMHC has said we will go ahead with this one under the new program and they are funding it themselves. They haven't asked us for any participation in it.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, can the Minister then elaborate for us on whether a municipality is

defined as a non-profit organization that would be eligible under that program?

MR. JOHNSTON: A municipality can set up a non-profit organization. There is no problem at all with that, if I am correct, and if I'm wrong, my understanding of the program is yes, they can.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, the answer is somewhat ambiguous. Can a municipality in itself, in its own right, be that non-profit organization qualifying for that program?

MR. JOHNSTON: No, they must form a non-profit organization.

MR. USKIW: Is there any logic or reason given for that policy, Mr. Chairman?

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, the province, if we want to use that particular section to build anything, we would have to do it through our Manitoba Non-Profit Housing Organization which is set up at the present time. I don't see any problems with the a municipality setting up a non-profit organization if they want to but I would say there are a lot of non-profit organizations that have charters in many areas that could go ahead and do it.

By the way, if you go for the 90 percent, your land value is regarded as part of your 10 percent.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, yes, the Minister keeps repeating the term, "People should be able to live where they want to live and shouldn't be told by the government where they should live," and I am sort of amazed at that kind of political posturing on the part of the Minister, Mr. Chairman, because I am sure that he is aware that in every community where MHRC has a program, there is a volunteer community housing authority which indeed makes decisions with respect to the location of low rental units, senior citizen accommodation, etc., taking into account the demand factors within the community, the logistics that are required, and so on. And therefore it is very much a local community decision-making process. How does the Minister interpret that to mean that somehow people don't have the right under the existing program to decide where they wish to live. They are free applicants; they are not compelled to move into any particular unit. They apply for units that are being built on recommendation of the local housing authority; the municipalities are involved. Where does the Minister get this idea that the people are forced to live where they don't want to live?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, to answer the member's question, you are in a smaller I probably have to say that in the rural areas, if town, I don't think that you have that much of a problem. In the city it does become a problem to us, which I explained last night.

Mr. Chairman, we sent out 463 questionnaires last week and only 57 have been returned. These are people who have applications with the Winnipeg Regional Housing. Question 4 was, "Given the option, which would you prefer: Stay in present accommodation and receive a rent supplement. Twenty-seven out of the 57 returned said yes, which is 47 percent.

Move into another private rental unit and receive rent supplement. Only one said yes, which is 2 percent.

Move into government elderly persons' housing. Twenty-five said yes, which is 44 percent.

So, you know, there is an indication that they do want to have shelter or move into housing, but there is a definite indication that they want to remain in the districts that they are in, as much as possible.

MR. USKIW: Well, but, Mr. Chairman, I totally agree with that kind of request. There is nothing wrong with that. I think people should have accommodations in their own communities and that within the Winnipeg Housing Authority, the Winnipeg Region, there is no logic that would compel MHRC to not yield to that kind of a legitimate request. The Corporation is able to construct facilities in every corner of the city to meet that particular demand. That is the whole purpose of having a local housing authority work in co-operation with MHRC, and that is to sift through the demands that are made upon the system, to handle the preferences of the applicants in a logical fashion. There has never been any attempt, as far as I am concerned or at least I have no knowledge of any attempt to restrict access on the theory that people have to relocate from one community to another in order to gain access because of some bureaucratic or government policy. It has been to date a very flexible program, as far as I am aware. Now, there may be logistical problems such as land assembly, relationships between different levels of government in zoning and so on, banking of land, but those are logistical problems; certainly it has never been a policy that MHRC would not try to respond as much as it is realistic to expect to them to, to the legitimate demands of people who do not want to move away from their own particular neighbourhood.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, I don't ever recall saying that MHRC was forcing anybody to move

from their own neighbourhood. My statements last night were on the basis that people would prefer to live where they want and I also said that the planning of the senior citizens' housing has been such that that hasn't been able to be done. We have empty units in one area. We have a situation where we have applications and I read it out last night, I have it here, signed by Mr. Charies. We are not able, at the present time, to fill those units. The people will come along and say, "Yes, I would like to be in your senior citizens' housing but I don't want to go to that one."

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, I am sure that the Minister would agree that that is to be expected and I am sure that the Minister would concur that to the extent that it occurs, it is a fraction of a percentage point of the program that is involved in that kind of a situation. How many units are we talking about where there is some problem in filling as opposed to applications for units that don't exist in other communities? I am sure it is a very minute amount, while it is an example, but I would be surprised if it was a percentage point of the program.

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, Mr. Chairman, to read the paragraph again, it is at Moray and Strauss: "To date, 36 bachelor suites and all eight one-room bedroom suites in the senior citizens' building have been filled. This leaves 61 vacant bachelor suites. A total of 22 bachelor suite applications have been forwarded to them, however, as of this date, we have no additional applications on hand to forward. This probably may carry on for some time."

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I would like the Minister to tell me how many units that is of the total number of units that MHRC is involved with? How many thousand units are we now operating?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, I haven't had a chance to peruse them yet but we . . .

MR. USKIW: Well, give us a ballpark figure, Mr. Chairman.

MR. JOHNSTON: How many units do we have?

MR. USKIW: Yes, how many units does MHRC now have?

MR. JOHNSTON: Forty-eight hundred EPH in Winnipeg.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I think that is a very credible program. If we have 5,000 units, just under 5,000 units in Winnipeg, and we have two or three dozen placement problems, I think that is a tremendously credible program. I don't think that it is fair to attack the administration for failing to do a proper job in terms of supplying the units where they are needed. I think that is a tremendously credible program, Mr. Chairman.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, that is 61 units in one building; that is a very large percentage.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, the Minister chooses to take it as a number of units out of one building and I appreciate that there may be such a localized situation. But out of the total experience of MHRC in the City of Winnipeg, out of 5,000 units, I don't see that as something approaching a crisis situation.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, we have been going over the applications and we can assure you that we have many applications for senior citizens' housing that say that I will only want to go to one particular area or one particular building, in many cases. I am saying that the decision to move into that particular area and build that particular senior citizens' home was a bit of a mistake because we can't fill it and I don't know whether the member is interested or not.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Fort Rouge, who has been waiting patiently for some time.

MR. LLOYD AXWORTHY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that patience is all we have left these days. Mr. Chairman, I have some questions arising to the Minister out of comments he made last night about some of the exchanges that took place so I am really more in the field of trying to get some information at this point in time.

As I understand it, the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation has presently or is about to transfer the management of a substantial number of its units to private real estate management firms. I wonder if the Minister could indicate to what extent that has already occurred or is about

to occur and how he would proceed to assign the management contracts for these firms? Will it be on a tender basis; will it be negotiated; and how will the fees be established for those management real estate firms to look after the units?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, the board recommended to me about two and a half months ago that with the Moray and Strauss building and the Pembina and Silverstone building, we should try a management contract. Oldfield, Kirby and Gardner had made a presentation to our social housing manager indicating that they would like to operate and manage some of our buildings. We decided that the Moray and Strauss, and Pembina and Silverstone, two new units coming onstream, that we would try Oldfield, Kirby and Gardner in these two units. Since that time, we have been flooded with letters from all management companies requesting them being considered to manage our properties.

We haven't moved on any of those at all. We are in an experimental situation with Moray and Strauss, and Pembina and Silverstone, and if we find it is money-saving, if we find it is more efficient, we would go to look for more management but only on a tender basis. Now, I must say to the member that I am not sure how you request tenders on that particular type of business, whether you ask them to come in and tell you how much they charge per unit or just how exactly the tendering would work, but certainly we don't intend, if we go to any more management at all, to give it to one company.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Chairman, one of the questions that would concern me about that practice, I don't object to them doing an experiment, but one of the concerns I would express is who in fact would make judgment about the placement of tenants and the judgment about the kind of tenants who would be registered in any one building? I think that because you are dealing in the area of social housing that one has to be particularly careful and sensitive to tenant characteristics and in many cases tenant problems. Many families or individuals moving in carry with them sometimes some very serious difficulties as a family unit or as individuals, which perhaps private managers aren't as prepared to accept or tolerate. So I would want to know as to whether the private managers of these firms in fact have the right to eject tenants or to allocate or determine who in fact is received into the buildings under their management?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, all applications for our units, whether they are senior citizens or family housing, must go through the central registry. Any applications that are forwarded to the people who are managing these two blocks at the present time, they are forwarded to them from the central registry. They do interviewing on the basis of income, etc. It is very simple; the rules are laid down and the rents are set according to the scale which they have to work from, which is presented by us. They don't have any authority to say yes or no, they just have the authority to make sure that the people that we send to them, that the applications that we have qualify and want to live there.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Chairman, that's not quite the point I was raising. While the applications are forwarded to the central registry, does the new management group, the private management group, have the right both of either vetoing those applications according to whatever judgment they make, or of assigning or rejecting, evicting tenants after a period of time in the buildings, for some cause or concern that they would register? How would you provide some protection or appeal against those judgments?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, there is a visit from the Winnipeg Regional to the people on the applications that are sent to them. If they find that the person has misrepresented themselves regarding income after the interview or the examination that they have, they can refuse to not let them in but they must come back to us when that happens. They do have the privilege of evicting somebody, as managers, if the people are not living up to the rules and regulations that are laid down by the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation and any person that they would try to evict or give eviction notice to, would certainly have the opportunity of coming to us first or making representation to us.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Chairman, I would simply ask the Minister then to, as the experiment proceeds to ensure that there was very clear and understandable explanations given to tenants about their rights in this regard.

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, the Landlord and Tenant Act applies certainly, and as I said, it's an experiment. We have tried to cover all of the loopholes and if we find that there are any problems that the member is bringing up, I assure you that we will get to the bottom of it, if we find that

the experiment doesn't work, but we haven't any intention of moving any further until we have tested this one out thoroughly.

MR. AXWORTHY: Well, Mr. Chairman, the reason I raised the issue is that it's not an experiment unique to Manitoba. It has been tried in other jurisdictions, and one of the problems that is sometimes faced when social housing is transferred to private management is that certain biases can be built in to the selection of tenants or the judgment as to who was an acceptable tenant or had acceptable behaviour and that it could lead to some form of discrimination being applied. Unless there are proper safeguards built into that procedure so that the tenants, not just under the Landlord and Tenant Act, because oftentimes they are — as we've discovered in the past — people are not aware that those rights are even theirs to use — but that there are clearer safeguards back to the corporation or the regional housing authority to ensure that there would be some form of appeal or response to that situation. I'm not objecting to the experiment; I think it's worth trying as long as those safeguards are very clearly set out and that the Minister would ensure that that would be the case.

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, I can only say that we feel we have built in all the safeguards and I appreciate the honourable member's concern we have the same concerns. The people do have the right of appeal; they don't have to be out on the street before they come and see us. I assure you that every case of that type will be looked into.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Chairman, while we're on the question of management, I would be interested in finding out a little bit more how the new system in the government itself is being managed. It's still unclear as to the exact responsibilities of the Minister in relation to this Crown corporation. He is designated as a Minister without Portfolio responsible for Housing and the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation is a Crown corporation with a separate board of directors, therefore making policy decisions with its own board. I would like to know first if the Minister simply considers his duties to be a reporting duty transferring decisions from the board to the government and to the Legislature or is there a policy-making role that the Minister exercises in relation to the corporation which provides the board with specific policy outlines that they are then designed to implement? That would be one question I would be interested in finding out.

Secondly, what the relationship of the Minister is to other parts of the government which have housing responsibilities, do what degree does the Minister take some responsibility for some of the activities of the Leaf Rapids Development Corporation, or the Land Appraisal Commission, or the parts of the Labour Department which deal with code enforcements and code standards? In other words, to what degree is the Minister actually becoming in effect a Minister of Housing as recommended under the Task Force and does he foresee that to be his role? Does he agree with the idea there should be a Department of Housing, or are the pieces being put in place presently and does his present responsibilities cover these other areas of provincial activities which relate to housing?

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, on the first question, I would say to the honourable member that the Act is very clear. The Minister responsible for the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation has very wide powers. He does have the role of setting policy or directing policy of the corporation to the board. He can overrule the board; he can change the board with recommendations to Cabinet; he very simply has almost as much authority — well, as much I would say — as a Minister who is in charge of a line department. The reason for the words "without portfolio responsible for" is that it is a Crown corporation and we do not have a Department of Housing at the present time — which you mentioned. The Minister responsible for Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation has always been a Minister with another department under him previous to now so it's Minister without Portfolio responsible for — that's the reason for that.

The role we play as far as codes and everything are concerned we, in our construction, naturally have to — I hope I'm answering it in the right way — have to abide by all the building codes, safety codes and everything that is put forward by the other departments of government. We come under that just the same as anybody else. As far as real estate is concerned or land appraisal, we work very closely with the Land Appraisal Department and Public Works but we do have our own real estate group. I think the honourable member can remember me last year being very concerned about the battle that was always going on between MHRC and the real estate group of Public Works, the Land Value and Appraisal Branch. This last year, or a year and a half ago, the arrangement seemed to be made that we would have pretty well our own people to advise us on working with the land appraisal people because we were in a little different position than others. We were dealing with land for housing in commercial areas or city areas whereas the other appraisal

group was dealing in land for roads and this type of thing. It's been working very smoothly at the present time.

MR. AXWORTHY: Well, Mr. Chairman, one other question on the issue of the management of the corporation. Has the Minister taken any consideration of including any former representation by the tenants of the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation units on the board itself so that there would be some clear and telling perspective from their point of view on management questions, particularly if they're moving in to some of these new areas? Would there be a willingness, when a vacancy occurs, to provide for some form of representation by those who are living in the units themselves? I guess beyond that, to what degree, as the Minister takes on this experiment of transferring management of specific projects to the private sector, is there any consideration given, as is now being done in many of the American public housing programs, to provide for forms of tenant management of those programs so that the projects would be operated by those who are living in them and therefore develop a sense of responsibility and accountability for the units themselves?

MR. JOHNSTON: The input that the tenant has, like the Winnipeg Regional Housing Authority has nine people on the board. It has three appointed by the city, three by the tenants and three by the Minister. I have some reservations as to the size of Winnipeg in relation to having only one board; possibly it could be looked at from a regional basis to allow the tenants to have really more input into it than they have. The Winnipeg Regional is, well, it has more than half of the units that we have in Manitoba. In the rural areas or wherever we have public housing or senior citizens' housing, the same thing applies. There are either three, three and three again, or else it's two, two, and two. It's always one-third tenants, one-third from the municipality or town and one-third by the Minister, so there's a very good input by the tenants as far as the rural area is concerned. They are very involved, but I do have reservations about the fact that there are only three tenants for the whole of Winnipeg and we are presently taking a look at the size of Winnipeg as far as the region is concerned.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Chairman, I would ask the Minister then, in undertaking some management experiments, whether he would consider also experimenting with some tenant management of individual projects to see how that might also work as a way of both dealing with costs and maintenance and other questions.

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, it's certainly something to take into consideration, Mr. Chairman. We hadn't looked at it at this point but it's certainly something that I would take into consideration and I will instruct the staff to get me any information they can on what is happening in other areas regarding that.

Just one other thing — we have now instituted and come forth with a policy whereby the Winnipeg Regional and the housing authorities throughout the country will have more input into saying where units should go, what type of units, what's the best size. This hadn't really been done to that great an extent before.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Chairman, I would like to raise with the Minister some actual program questions that came out of the discussion that took place last night. Let me preface it by saying that I generally agree with what I think is the position taken by the Minister, and that is not to get into the game of simply producing numbers of housing units for the sake of producing those numbers. I think it's always been an objection of mine that the previous government simply did the kind of the washing machine theory of housing, which was to just produce them off the assembly line without much reference to location or need. I believe, as I listened to the Minister's remarks last night, that there is an attempt to correct that. However, I think there is a contradiction, at least as I understood it in his statements last evening, when he said that there was an over-supply of public housing units in the suburban locations because they had been over-built, whereas most of the demand was in the Inner City area and yet it was difficult to provide more units in the Inner City area because the supporting services were not available. The obvious question that comes up — in other words, if you're going to provide for large numbers of senior citizens, for example, living in a fairly concentrated area, they obviously require fairly heavy supports in terms of health services, meal services, social services. Now, is the Minister, therefore, through the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation, or for that matter through other agencies of government, prepared to begin applying its support to the development of those services in the Inner City so that it can undertake a greater load of housing than it presently can accommodate?

MR. JOHNSTON: There's no question that the report I read out last night gives every indication

that public housing in the suburban areas — in fact we have them in Fort Garry, St. Vital and other areas — are hard to fill at times. In fact, we've even had trouble filling them, as I read in that report. I've also stated that we probably will fill them in time. But I mentioned last night that the core area is the problem and there is no question about it. It's one that has to be solved, and I agree with the member that to solve it, we've got to get together with every community service or every department of government when we do so. I remember being at a meeting with the honourable member in Fort Rouge, when we were talking about the project that's going on Stradbrook Street regarding services. We thought at that time that our department had done everything that they were expected to do in examination, going to the school board etc; I think they had done a good job. But to go into the core area and build without any regard for the extra services that are required as far as recreation, etc., is something that has to be done with caution. We have had representation from the organizations in the core area; they were very concerned when they saw that the land down there. Some of it had been expropriated, you're going to build a bunch of public housing here. They came to us very concerned. So, you know, that's something that certainly has to be taken into consideration.

I said during the election campaign, and I think the honourable member was at this meeting too, that there's got to be co-ordination, a body set up for the core area of Winnipeg between the province, the city and the people that live down there that have some sort of authority over what happens because we have several different groups working down there and nobody seems to be working together the way they should. But on the other side of the question, we can't ignore the fact that there is a need for shelter down there to low income families. And we have Midland, the second phase — or third phase, is it? Well, phase three —(Interjection)— No, it's phase three. I'm told the 14 scattered units were phase two. The City of Winnipeg, with the group that they are working with came to see me with a plan that they felt was what should be put in in phase three in Midlands. Their plan shows single family units. I don't know that we will get as much accommodation as we need by going that way, but that seems to be the way that the City and the group down there want to go.

I think it was two days ago I was told that we have informed them to go ahead, draw up the plans, and get going. We will be involved, as we were in the other part of it. And I think there is a senior citizens unit to go on the end on Isabel Street, if I'm not mistaken.

But, you know, I haven't completely answered your question on the core area, but I can say to you that there is no question — we can't ignore it. I think we should certainly know about schools and we should certainly know about many other things, but I don't know that we can ignore it by saying that we cannot build shelter here because the playgrounds and everything aren't here. I think we have to work with people to get that done.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Chairman, in addition to this co-ordination, which is in itself difficult enough, more specifically I am asking if the province is prepared to put capital investment into the development of services in that area? And I'm just not meaning even soft services, I mean even to up-grade in many cases the infrastructure of the inner city, which is substantially wearing out.

I would remind him that if you look at the five-year capital works budget of the City of Winnipeg, that there is very little assigned to the refurbishing of the water systems, aside from the one storm sewer system that they just approved, but that the service system of the inner city is also overtaxed, in terms of its capacity to absorb substantial new units of housing and requires capital investment, that the availability of services in terms of recreation, schools, health services are virtually inadequate. I think it is virtually non-existent in many cases. And yet you cannot build more housing until you get those services in place, because the inner city cannot absorb any more units.

Now, it seems to me that we're caught in a contradiction and perhaps the Minister could enlighten us by indicating what his targets are for the inner city. Does he intend to basically stop the production or supply of new housing — subsidized housing — in the inner city until those services are provided? Will there be a stoppage altogether? What can we expect say in the next three years — the life of this government, 3 ½ years — in the way of a program of housing in the inner city of Winnipeg?

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, to answer your first question, we have been participating in the core area of Winnipeg with the NIP Program and the voted amount in 1977-78 was \$715,000.00. This year the approved amount for the NIP area of Manitoba — I think it's probably 80 percent Winnipeg, at least 80 percent Winnipeg — is \$1,308,000.00. We have quite an increase, as far as the NIP Program is concerned but, as the honourable member knows, the NIP Program is over and the Federal Government has chosen to lump it in more . . . Instead of designated areas working with the municipalities on the overall program or in town, or it doesn't have to be an area, I'm not

clear on it. As I told the member in the House the other day, it's handled by Municipal Affairs since the new program has changed.

But to talk about the fact of the core area, there is no question that you can expect — and I can't give you the figures — that we will be taking surveys and looking at the properties which have come under us by expropriation, once we know what we're paying for them, of working to have units built in the core area of Winnipeg for shelter. We will have them scattered as much as we possibly can, but we're not going to ignore the core area. I can assure the honourable member of that. It's a problem. I don't have all the answers, and I don't think our department has all the answers for it yet, other than to say that we are not going to ignore it, from a point of view of shelter. All the other services you're speaking of have to be looked at, too.

MHRCs responsibility, basically, is either to overcome the affordability gap by grants or something, or by subsidies in some way, or to build units. Quite frankly, I can see overcoming the affordable gap in many many ways and many many programs other than public housing but I must say to the honourable member that the building of family housing in the core area is the one that I, personally, see at the present time as having to be used. I don't see how you can get around it, if you are going to have shelter down there.

We would hope that there would be as much upgrading of the houses in the area as possible. We do have several people down there that are working to upgrade houses. I believe the member knows of the Metis Federation's Canoe Organization. There are a couple of others that are all working to upgrade houses in that area that, quite frankly, shows. There is showing improvement in the housing down there in some of the older houses being upgraded, but there is more to be done. But we would like to scatter as much as possible.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Chairman, that further explains, I think, the confusion that at least has been in my mind — maybe not in others — and that is what the role of the corporation was going to be in terms of the supply of housing. I think the Minister might have been the source of some of that confusion because he had indicated in a opened, that he was speech, or a statement, I think, before the House going to be pulling out of the public housing business and didn't really indicate what was going to be replacing that, in terms of supply of housing. Even his statements last evening indicated that the major thrust of the government's program was on the affordability side, the demand side, trying to reduce the income gaps. And I wonder if he could be a little bit more specific as to what role he sees for the corporation, in terms of the supply of housing. Will it be to provide a capital assistance either through land or grants to non-profit or co-ops, primarily? Will that be the mechanism that will be used? Will they do direct housing supply in their own right, either the public housing mechanism or through the non-profit mechanism? Will they be prepared to provide for any form of loans or grants to private owners for upgrading purposes, for rehabilitation purposes? Will the corporation provide incentives, let's say, again, through perhaps land acquisition or the use of its expropriated land for other housing operators to supply land?

I'm not sure, yet, exactly what role he sees the corporation playing in supplying new units or refurbished units in the inner city.

MR. JOHNSTON: I am having a tough time trying to answer the question. I think I have come close to it by saying that there is no question that our direction will be to be in the subsidy area as much as possible to overcome the affordability gap.

Now, I maybe could explain it this way. If it costs us \$350 to maintain a unit per month, quite frankly there is a are all kinds of places that you can rent for that amount of money. If we want to go to supporting the person living in other units — in somebody else's units — why can't we? Why can't we take a look at that type of a program, or take a look at that type of application?

I have just been reading of a program that is very common in the United States, where the person that comes in and applies, and if he qualifies they give him a certificate to go and find the unit. And, as a matter of fact, the certificate can even have a situation where he can get a bonus, an incentive if he does a good shopping job and if he finds accommodation that is suitable to him.

These programs, as the member knows, are all available to us, working with the Federal Government. We have programs going on in Ontario, where the developer or builder builds the units and they come in for 15 years on a subsidy basis, under another Section of the CMHC Act, where you're not tied in for 50 years, with the option to renew if you have to.

All of these things are available to us. I heard the member mention one morning on the radio

the Safer Program in B.C., which we have been examining very closely for a long time, where the 75 percent of the rent is paid, that's more than 35 percent of your income. All of these are available to us, but they have never been done.

Now, when I made the statement that we were moving towards overcoming the affordability gap by subsidy or support of some kind, I also said that I wouldn't presume to stand here before this audience and say that the Province of Manitoba will never build another public house or senior citizens' unit, because that's not true. But we will be doing it on the basis, as I've said, of need and very very thorough research.

You know, just a conversation that we had about a week ago with the staff. You know, there was a time when you could go out and you could build anywhere in this province, and there was a need. We're now at the point, at the present time, where we have to look very closely as to where we expand and where we go because we do have these problems that have come before us. I get irritated with the opposition and the previous government because they just won't seem to recognize that they're there, and I think that they are there. And I think that the honourable member knows that they're there, that there are other ways of doing things. It has taken us a long . . . Well, it has been eight months and we had to spend about four months working on the program that is being constructed this year — the 700 units — and we are sitting down examining things right now and hopefully being able to come up with a program on a three-year basis. And that's the way we're talking to the Federal Government; we're talking a three-year basis.

I can only say to the honourable member I was very enthused with the first discussions and when the discussions started with the Federal Government, but I'm at the present time becoming quite deflated about the fact that things are not moving as fast as we would like them to and we are going and try to have them move.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Chairman, I can't do much to help him on that last one right away but . . .

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, I was hoping you would.

MR. AXWORTHY: I'd hoped maybe to be in a position by this time to be able to do something about it but other events didn't happen.

Mr. Chairman, the question I would like to ask the Minister though, again perhaps he can't be more specific but I do take from his remarks that he does indicate that the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation is prepared to commit to the supply of additional units in the inner city and presumably the services that go along with it in order to make them reasonable units. While he hasn't identified the exact means of doing that, I think that there is important to establish the dichotomy between sort of income-type programs, trying to reduce the income burden upon tenants or users of housing, and the supply problem, the actual supply of units.

The Minister is aware that there is a major sort of extinguishing of housing in the inner city as a consequence of the code enforcement programs of the City of Winnipeg. Last year it was close to 700 units; it will probably be similar to that this year. Those units are being taken out in the sector of housing which there is no replacement going in. It's attacking housing which was primarily available to young working people who live in the inner city, to senior citizens, to students. The public housing program itself doesn't respond to that with the exception of senior citizens so that there is no replacement going on for those units which are being taken out other than stuff that is being built in all the suburbs and, as he admits, that is not a suitable replacement.

So I am particularly concerned that we are losing the battle on supply in the inner city at the present moment and while I accept his need to work out alternatives, I think he should be cognizant of the fact that too much contemplation of those alternatives will mean that we will be even further set back than we have been already. I would simply ask, or recommend, perhaps extol, that some initiatives be taken to start looking at the supply. I would say that perhaps the easiest area — without getting into the new units or the supplying of units — would be to provide assistance for the refurbishing, rehabilitation of older units and perhaps even to begin purchasing through the mechanism of the provincial non-profit housing corporation or through the municipal ones, the acquisition of older apartment blocks, many of them which are on the market right now, their upgrading and their availability for those residences of inner city who are now finding that a lot of the available accommodation that they would normally have is, in fact, being . . . extinguished from the market.

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, I'm informed that one of the things that we have taken into eligibility in the core area is the fact that if your house is condemned or codes or etc.. or demolition is something

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that we are accepting as a part of the qualification for looking at public housing, the research that's being done, our figures on demolition are being taken into consideration very seriously. We know that it's happening and we know that we have to take that into consideration. I can only say to the member that the thinking that's going on or the research that's going on, I can agree with him, it can't go on too long. I can only say to him that I can give him a commitment that we will be working in the core area but I can't give him the commitment that the recreation and everything that goes with it is going to be there. I will make a commitment to work with the other departments and the Minister of Urban Affairs as much as possible, or will work with him to get this done because we have to!

I just might add here that the programs as far as the rural area this year, I can name some that have been in consideration for a long time. I don't know whether you want me to pull out the files again but I mean the original recommendation from the staff and board of MHRC was changed completely by the Minister. The documents are right there. We will be looking at Virden, Deloraine, Roblin — which we cut off. We are in the area of Springfield. There were some approaches made that we didn't go ahead with because we felt there were too many units involved for the number of applications. We can go into as many of those places in what we call the rural and native program in which we participate with the Federal Government on a 75/25 and we have certain areas designated to us. We are able to build senior citizens' units under that program and we can build very nice duplexes in many of these areas, six, or eight, or four, whatever we feel we need so we are moving into some of those areas this year in that particular way.

Now, we haven't got from the Federal Government the exact amount of money we're going to get on Section 43 yet. Let me explain to the honourable member that the Federal Government is saying Section 43 which looks like they're trying to phase out. Now the new program is saying to us that the province will borrow the money and the Federal Government will give us an 8 percent write-down. Now we've worked that out here in the province and we find that that would be a benefit of 14 cents per unit, 17 cents per unit, this year. But next year, with any inflated costs or anything, the government is still going to be in that 8 percent write-down business and the inflated costs are going to be the province's. We haven't been opposing that all that much. We feel that we may have to look at it the same way ourselves but we haven't been told under that program and we will be allowed to go ahead on our own, we won't have to have plans reviewed, we'll be pretty autonomous, but we haven't been told how much per unit we can pay under that program when we've been trying and working with them to try and get a three-year agreement and it hasn't been going as fast as we'd like it.

The other provinces are in the same position but I'm not going to be critical of the Federal Government. There are some things that we don't like that we can talk about and that type of thing and I'm not going to be critical of the Federal Government on the fact that they're taking a look at their overall housing policy. I don't see anything wrong with them doing it or us doing it. We will have a slow-down this year because of that.

MR. AXWORTHY: Well, Mr. Chairman, going back to one point. I think probably the point of difference between the Minister and myself is on this question that you can't build additional units of housing in the inner city until you do something about improving — for lack of a better word — let's say the neighbourhood services that go along with it. I would only ask why it would not be possible with the new federal program of the community assistance or community services program which will provide \$10.5 million for the province in 1978-79 and if he says that he's allocating \$1.3 million that used to be allocated to NIP and folds that in, that comes to close to \$12 million worth of assistance.

The new federal program does include a range of options in terms of medical facilities, health facilities, recreational facilities as part of its program, that we couldn't be setting up a kind of an urban service bank or urban service assistance program so that the inner city could begin to acquire an expanded capacity to absorb more housing units otherwise he's going to get into the problem that he deplored last night which was a kind of ghettoization difficulty that he can't build more. You know, the Garry thing was a serious mistake and it was wrong to go ahead because it was just not the thing to do on that site, just to load it up the way it was going to be loaded up. But it's not just on that site. It happens to be in my constituency and I know that within a radius, I suppose, of about half a mile that there are several other senior citizens' units so that the average population over 65 — in those census tracts on the area — is now close to 30 percent, 35 percent; a few more units in there and it will be close to 50 percent and that, Mr. Chairman, gives one some real pause. There's that review and research that you're doing and I think it's possible to handle that but not with the kind of services that exist there now. There is simply nothing or very few kinds

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of options or opportunities for senior citizens in that area to avail themselves of in the way of things to do, aside from the new Winnipeg library, and going shopping at Eaton's, there isn't much more to do than that kind of thing. We're not possible to absorb more.

So I won't pursue the point further but I would simply say I think that the answer to the dilemma is there with the new community assistance program. By folding the provincial part in with the federal part, then you may have the ability not just to go into designated areas but to strategically locate additional services throughout the inner city that will enable it to absorb more housing. I would encourage the Minister to look at that option very seriously.

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, I agree with the member on that. I'd just like to tell him that I have the figure now. The total amount of money that has been spent in Winnipeg as far as the NIP program is concerned, approved, is \$22,624,000 while the NIP program was in process between the Federal and Provincial Government. I might say that there are provinces that are not happy with the NIP program and they're not happy because they weren't administrated properly, or that's what they tell me, but I can only say that Winnipeg has done a pretty darned good job with their NIP program and it's been well administrated.

The Community Services agreement has not been agreed to by the provincial Ministers and the Federal Minister at this point. I might say that my officials and the Minister of Urban Affairs officials are invited to another meeting in Quebec City on the 31st and 1st, which is next Wednesday and Thursday, if we're not still in Estimates, gentlemen.

MR. AXWORTHY: I'll be away next week, Mr. Chairman. We should be able to get over them fairly quickly.

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to — I notice that we only have about five minutes remaining — I'd like to simply ask the Minister a question that I asked last night although he wasn't able to answer and that is the way in which he intends to deal with the recommendations of the Bellan Commission in terms of the provincial land holdings within the Greater Winnipeg area. Again, I believe there were certain suggestions made both during the election and after that this land would be transferred back for private housing purposes. Aside from the one decision made on the Fort Garry land holding, I don't think anything further has been heard in those areas. I believe there are large tracts of land some of which are serviced in South St. Vital area held by Leaf Rapids; in the northwest corner of the city I believe there are some. There may be other pockets which don't come to mind immediately. Can we expect, do we assume, that the plan or program of the provincial government is to dispose of those public land holdings in some kind of market basis or tender basis for the production of private housing or will there be a combined program of retaining certain portions of that land holding for the use of social housing?

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, the first answer is that if they are disposed of, they'll be on a tender basis. The second thing, that any properties we dispose of, we're discussing this at the present time, that there must be a percentage of houses available within the project that we would be involved in or certainly would qualify for any program that we may have. That gives us the scattering effect as well. As far as the properties that he is talking about, there are properties in Charleswood, there is one in Brandon; north Winnipeg is the other part of the . . . Inkster, where there are 250 lots at the present time; and yes, South St. Boniface is probably the most valuable piece of property that we have at the present time. But certainly it will be housing and we have to take a look at the fact as to how fast we can do it versus how fast somebody else can do it. We have been getting all kinds of requests for our land and I don't doubt that the previous government was having the same type of requests but the decision on the disposal of the land at the present time hasn't been made. It has got to be something that is very serious, you know, with the amount of land that we have, to just start putting it on the market helter-skelter without a lot of thought going into it, plus the fact that I would say that some of it is quite a bit more valuable than what we paid for it. We are paying interest all the time to CMHC. Any income made from properties, I would expect and assume that it would be used for the benefit of housing in Manitoba.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Chairman, the one thing that I found a little curious in the Minister's statement was when he said that to dispose of this *landen masse* would be to disrupt the market. I thought that might be the whole point of the exercise, to try to deal with the whole question of inflated land prices which the Bellan Commission properly documented, that maybe the one way of trying to get land costs down would be to put a substantial supply of land on the market so that we don't go through the 15 or 20 percent increases per annum that we have been receiving for the

last five years. It would seem to me that if that report had anything to merit it, it was the identification that the inflation spiral in land is continuing in the city and that the only way to break it is to provide for substantial new supplies of land which presumably the introduction of this in the market might be providing. I would ask the Minister if he would take that recommendation seriously because the land costs are still going up.

MR. JOHNSTON: The prices of land in Winnipeg have stabilized considerably right now. There isn't what you would call a real big shortage of available property and lots in Winnipeg. I think the honourable member can even take a look at the report that was done by his organization, which I think I complimented him on last year. I just don't think that we should just holus-bolus put all that land on the market. Now, I am saying that's my opinion at the present time and it is being looked at as to how we dispose of the properties or the use of the properties. There is no question in my mind that the profits from it will be used for housing. Now, the member has got a point. Maybe if we do put it on all at once, it would bring prices down. I hesitate to say that it would but we will certainly take a look at it.

MR. AXWORTHY: I believe it is 4:30, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, the hour of 4:30 having arrived for Private Members' Hour, committee rise.

SUPPLY — HEALTH

MR. CHAIRMAN, Mr. Abe Kovnats: I would like to direct the honourable members to the gallery on my left where we have 17 students of Grade 8 standing from the Alonsa School under the directorship of Steve Scrupa, and this school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose. I would like the honourable members to welcome them.

I would direct the honourable members to Page 38, Department of Health and Social Development, Resolution No. 59. We are on (h)(1)Dental Services: Salaries. (1)—pass - - the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. A. R. (Pete) ADAM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the Minister for giving assurance yesterday that the program for dental care in our schools would be maintained at least to those areas where in the schools last year, and in addition to that there would be one extra school division at Turtle Mountain, I believe. So in that respect I thank the Minister for allaying some of the concerns that have been expressed to the Minister and to myself in regard to cutbacks on this particular very important program.

I am concerned, however, when the Minister indicates that he is going to bring in the dental profession to undertake to carry out some of these programs. We can't seem to get a clear picture of what the intentions are at this particular time and I'm just wondering whether or not the Minister intends to impose a user fee on students, school children who will be receiving dental care service because I'm concerned that the dentists in the past have not provided, in my opinion, have provided dental service to people of the province and particularly in respect to people living in remote areas.

The dentists have been reluctant to go out in rural areas and they have tended to concentrate into our urban centres and in some respect they are responsible for this program being initiated by the previous administration, and to now say that we are going to try and save money by bringing in the dentists, you know, the Minister still has to convince me. I have a letter addressed to the Minister from teachers of my area, from the Rorketon School, and they have expressed concern on what the Minister is undertaking here. They say so in no uncertain terms.

I would quote from one paragraph. Well, I will read the letter and I can table it if the Minister wants, but he does have the original copy. It is addressed to the Honourable Louis R. Sherman, Minister. "We the teachers of Rorketon School have been involved in the Manitoba Children's Dental Program and we strongly feel that any curtailment of the program will seriously affect the dental health of this area. Many students in our area have been having severe dental problems and many parents were concerned about the problems, but were unable to afford the expense of first of all driving the children to distant dentists, and then attempting to pay the absurd prices charged by the dentists. The Dental Program sponsored by the government was welcomed by 95 percent of the parents in our area. Any cutback in this program will probably be remembered until the next provincial election." So I would remind the Minister that —(Interjection)— Mr. Chairman, there is concern with people in the rural areas that the Minister is — there is a new word and it is called

foozling — that the Minister is fozzling around with a good program.

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

MR. ENNS: Can you refer to your rules to see whether that is a parliamentary term?

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, fozzling is a —(Interjection)— Yes. The Member for Lakeside is continually trying to get into the act, the showmanship that he tries to put on from time to time, and most of the time he speaks from the seat of his pants, but today at least he has given us the courtesy of standing up.

MR. ENNS: Now, now, now.

MR. ADAM: The last paragraph of the letter reads: "It seems absurd a program so valuable to our young people, the next generation, is to be cut back or scrapped, because it was initiated by a former government. We are aware of the financial restraints, but please have a closer look at this area before something very valuable is lost."

I believe that the Minister has a problem of philosophy, that is the problem that he faces in my opinion. He is worried and one of his backbenchers yesterday made the statement or the comment, again from his seat, that this program is state controlled. Well, I want to remind him of the contents of this letter and this is signed by 11 teachers of the Rorketon School.

Mr. Chairman, people are concerned about the Minister cutting back on this program, and you know when we see him cut back millions of dollars in succession duties and other tax benefits to the wealthiest people in our province, then we start to ask questions as to why you will deprive young children of excellent dental care and say you can't afford to do that because of the restraint. We don't have the funds, but yet on the other hand you turn around and give a windfall to the highest income people in our province.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Logan.

MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wasn't here yesterday, I don't know whether the Minister has answered this question or not, but can the Minister inform the committee, how many of the second term dental students will be continuing next semester?

A MEMBER: He answered that this morning.

MR. JENKINS: He answered that this morning. Oh, I'm sorry then, I didn't realize that the Honourable Minister had answered that question. I'll check Hansard and see what his answer is.

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

MR. SHERMAN: Well, Mr. Chairman, I would just say to the Honourable Member for Logan, that I did have a chance to address the question of the nurses, both those who are graduating this June and those who will be graduating next June, this morning. I said that I could inform honourable members of the House that those who are graduating this June will be accommodated into the program and I have offered my guarantee of my good faith to make the most strenuous efforts I can in these next few weeks, and immediate months, to work out a program that will involve the private profession, but a program that will accommodate those who are finishing their first year this year and would be going in next September, and I encourage them to continue in their courses. The bursaries and the funding assistance, that have been available to them in the past, will be continued.

With respect to the points raised by the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose, I would just say that I certainly respect that letter that the member referred to, from the teachers in Rorketon. I have no difficulty in admitting to the House that I've had a good many letters on the subject, all of which I respect. I would only say to the honourable member that I'm on record, before I was elected to represent Fort Garry in this particular Legislature this past fall and before I became Minister, as being in favour of a Children's Dental Health Program, as universal as we can possibly make it, but the most cost-effective one that we can achieve and one that gives the opportunity for the private profession to participate if that can be done in a practical and viable way. I have favoured the program and I continue to favour the program.

With respect to his question about user fees, I can say categorically, no, Mr. Chairman. That

subject has never come up and it's certainly not within the contemplation of the government.

MR. JENKINS: Well, I thank the Honourable Minister for his answer. But his answer is not quite complete, especially in view of the fact that when this subject was being debated in the Department of Education Estimates, and the Minister was dragged in, perhaps against his own will, into that debate, there was no place for these students who will be going into the program for their second term this fall, in September, and what the Minister is saying is that he is trying to assure these people that he will try to find something for them. But in other words the Minister doesn't know at this present time how many of those 18 or 19 students will be continuing, and that is the real problem that I think he faces and we face with the loss of these people if the program is interrupted, and I think that is the unfortunate thing.

I think I did hear this morning that the Minister was saying that the program per child cost in the Turtle Mountain area I think is \$125 per . Minister can nod his head whether I am correct or incorrect on that statement. And the fact is that this program is just getting onto its feet, and really starting to operate. We are now going to have a hiatus of at least two years, if next year the Minister finds out that this program, which he is anticipating to utilize the dental service — and I must say went into an area that was not an area where people really need dental services, because in the southern part of the Province of Manitoba I don't think that we have the problem of dental care that we do have in other parts — especially in northern Manitoba and in some of the remote areas. And that is the real problem, and with the cutting of the program the remote areas where we have been anticipating this program should be moving into, especially in the central core area too where we require this type of a dental care program, especially for preschool children and children up to the age of 12, because many of these people are on very limited incomes. The only dental care program that is available to them right now is the one that has been in place on a very limited basis in the Winnipeg School Division No. 1 for many many years. It certainly is not within the financial capability of the Winnipeg School Division to enlarge that program, given the restraint cutbacks of the present government.

So it is disturbing to see that this program, which has been given the impetus to start, has been working fairly well in the Province of Saskatchewan, has been reviewed by independent dental teams and stated that perhaps it is the best program that we have in this country, and for the Minister to start tinkering around with the sector who in many cases have abrogated their responsibility as far as supplying the dental care needs, especially in northern Manitoba and the remote areas, and so it is very very disturbing. I predict that the Minister will, within one or two years, come back and say, "Well, maybe we are going to have to start this program up again," but you'll be starting from scratch again, and that's the unfortunate thing. The program was just starting to get on its feet and you were having a continuing supply of people graduating who could come in and work in this field, but now you're going to have this cutting-off, it's going to be at least two years before you'll get any new graduates if you start down the road a year or two from now. You are going to have to start those students; they are going to have a two semester term, which is approximately two years, before he will be able to produce the people to enlarge the program as what was envisaged by the previous government.

So I would urge the Minister to take a real hard look at this program and see if he can prevail upon his Cabinet colleagues to reconsider, because I think it has been an excellent program. Because the teeth we save today for children are teeth that they will have in their adulthood, and I think anyone who has anything to do with the field of dentistry will tell you that the preventative medicine that is carried out today will certainly pay off in many many years to come. I say this especially because I can remember seeing the Minister of Health when he first took over the portfolio, appearing on TV and saying that he was a great advocate of prevention, and this is a preventative program. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, as the old proverb says, and so I would say to the Minister, quite seriously, to take a very serious hard look at this. I can assure him that if he wants to come back with increased expenditures that we would not oppose him on this side of the House, especially for that —(Interjection)— My colleague says, "Did we caucus that?" Well, I don't know if we did or not. I am just talking off the top of my head because I think. . .

MR. ENNS: That's better than talking from the seat of your pants.

MR. JENKINS: Well, that is better than talking from the seat of my pants, I quite agree with the Honourable Member for Lakeside.

But, I want to try and appeal as much as I can to the Minister to try and save this program,

because I really think that his Cabinet colleagues are not that interested in preventative medicine as he is. I wish him all the luck in the world and if I can do anything to help him persuade those people to preserve this program, I would be delighted to do so.

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

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, I have been away during part of the discussion on the Dental Program and therefore I don't know the extent to which the Minister discussed and described the proposed pilot program he is having with the dental profession.

I am wondering if he has done so and even if he has whether he would mind summarizing in some way the proposal that is before him now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. SHEAN: Mr. Chairman, the pilot project in Turtle Mountain results from the rejection by the Turtle Mountain School Division of the opportunity to have the government program introduced into that division and their request, through the Dental Association to the government, for an opportunity to experiment with a system operated by the private profession. Whether that was initiated by the private profession or the school division, I cannot say, but the ultimate request to the government came from those two parties.

The concept is for the government, the taxpayers of Manitoba to fund the pilot project to approximately \$32,500.00. The parameters are actually \$32,500 at the bottom end of the scale, and I think about \$37,000 at the top end of the scale. Out of the appropriation that we are looking at here in the Committee at this moment, to provide dental care, dental treatment to school children of ages six and seven, I believe, in that school division through the profession itself during the year commencing September 1, 1978 running until August 31, 1979, the funding permits and the concept of the program permits two dental visits for each child in that category in the school division. We are looking at approximately 225 children; something in that range. They would have six-month checkups or visits, and the unit cost works out, I think, to \$125 per child, on the mathematics.

The project itself, although I recognize that to a certain extent one is going to be comparing apples with oranges because the Turtle Mountain School Division basically consists of relatively urbanized population — relatively urbanized — concentrated around three fairly substantial communities, but the project and the results of the project will be evaluated at the end of the year to determine the degree of utilization, to determine the effectiveness and the cost effectiveness, to determine the satisfaction of the children and the quality of dental care and dental health maintained on behalf of those children, and in particular to determine the satisfaction of parents in the division with the services available to their children.

I suppose one of the major aspects we'll be scrutinizing very closely is the utilization because this is one of the big questions in a program that is operated other than through the school system, as is the case in the Children's Dental Health Program currently in place under the aegis of the government. So, we'll be measuring all those factors very closely, measuring the degree of commitment and contribution and dedication, if you like, of the private profession itself; the need and the degree of need for dental auxiliaries, whether they be nurses, technicians, assistants or hygienists, and on the basis of that, attempting to draw some conclusions as to how the private profession might be incorporated with its expertise and its services into a universal program extended throughout the province that would, in my view, always involve a very considerable degree of state involvement.

I don't envision, in a province like Manitoba or even, as far as I can see, anywhere in western Canada, a system that would be totally viable if run entirely by the private profession. I may be leaping to conclusions there, but I think because of geographic problems, transportation problems, that unless the private profession were heavily subsidized, I think it would probably be difficult to work to that kind of a conclusion, at least in the very near future. But I do envision the prospects of a mixed system that would involve both the input and expertise of the government professionals and the input and expertise of the private professionals.

I don't think that we want to rehash the question of the rationalization and justification for involving the private profession; I've been all over that with the Honourable Member for St. Boniface earlier when we discussed this item under the Department of Education Estimates. But just to capsulize, it's our view that the private profession did not have meaningful opportunity. I know what the view of the Honourable Member for St. Johns is, and I know what the view of the Honourable Member for St. Boniface is, but the impression that we have from the Dental Association is that they did

not have the opportunity for meaningful involvement. —(Interjection)— Well, you know, the Member for St. Johns can draw what conclusions, or make what comments he wants, but we are for the moment the stewards of the affairs of the taxpayers of Manitoba; we have made no bones about the fact that we believe that when moving into any programming areas the professionals and semi-professionals and para-professionals and other workers in those fields relevant to that question should be given an opportunity to participate and contribute; should be considered for their advice, and their expertise; should be consulted; and here is a field delivering dental health and preventive dental medicine to children in which there is obviously the professional sector of the community that has a legitimate claim to involvement and participation, at least to legitimate consultation.

Now, my honourable friends say they had it; the dental profession says they didn't receive that opportunity. We are attempting to —(Interjection)— Well, we're attempting to be equitable in our approach; we want to give them that opportunity; if they can't be fitted in, then the program ultimately will not include them. If they can be fitted in, the program ultimately will include them.

The Turtle Mountain pilot project is simply that; to enable us to draw some conclusions that would admittedly be relevant primarily to a fairly urbanized area of the province. Certainly, no one is holding it up as an example of a remote area that would be difficult to service, but we will be able to draw some conclusions, some measurements, particularly measurements having to do with the commitment of the profession itself and their sincerity in wanting to be involved in such a program. So the conclusions from that pilot project will be part of the general information that will then be available to us as we try to formulate the final form of the program.

The Honourable Member for Logan suggests that I should be making an effort to prevent the termination of the program; he says that we're going to be starting from scratch a couple of years from now. I want to assure him that that is not the case; the program is not being terminated therefore there is nothing from which to start from scratch. The program is continuing in the 29 school divisions it is in; the only thing that is not being entered into this year is geographic expansion except for the addition of Turtle Mountain, which is being served by the pilot project to which I referred.

The Member for Logan also raised the question about the nurses and the fact that the big challenge, the big question and the big problem was the nurses who were just finishing the first year of their course and would be going back for their second year next fall. That is one of two major challenges; I don't differentiate between that and the problem and the challenge relative to the nurses graduating this June. If I have to look at priorities in terms of what has to be dealt with first, I suggest to the Honourable Member for Logan that the first priority was the 28 coming out this June. My Cabinet colleagues and I are agreed, and my caucus colleagues, the government caucus is agreed that we can and we will and we want to accommodate them, and they will be accommodated and can be, in the 29 divisions in existence, simply through age expansion, without the necessity of geographic expansion.

The second part of the problem, the one that the Honourable Member for Logan refers to, is still a challenge that I face, but I can assure him that it's something that I'm not letting lie fallow. It's something that I put at the top of my priority list in my duties as Minister and I will be working very intensely and I have been and will continue to through the weeks and months immediately ahead in the hope that by mid-summer I can announce to him and other members of this Legislature and Manitobans generally the structure of the program that we finally feel we can produce involving the private profession that will accommodate those nurses who are going into their second year of their course next fall and would be graduating in June of 1979. But I admit, as I said a few moments ago, I can't give them an air-tight guarantee of anything but my earnest efforts and my good faith in that respect. I intend to produce that kind of a program. It takes time, as the honourable member knows. In the meantime I encourage those students to go back and take their second year and take advantage of the bursaries and the government funding that will continue to be available to them.

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

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, before the lunch hour I was listening to the Minister and I took notes and the first word that I put in was "candid", and I wanted to take this chance and follow him immediately and say well, finally the Minister is being candid and quite honest and at least we know where he stands, but since then there has been a lot of exchange and he's managed to do it again — he's on every side of the questions and we can't fault him because he — it's yes, no, maybe, and so on. He's got it all covered. He reminds me of the person that was asking somebody else, "Give me a word that means yes, but that sounds like no", and this is what we've

had in the Estimates so far. All right, that's fair enough. The Minister has two or three times — and I hope he's not going to do that again — two or three times reminded us that he has a mandate and the decision is his. We know that. You know, we don't have to discuss that on every item. We know that. We are not challenging that. We also have a responsibility. Our responsibility is to point out, the same as my honourable friend when he was a member of the opposition, when there is any weaknesses or anything that we feel is going to hurt the people of Manitoba. The government then has the final word. There is no doubt about that, and if that wasn't the case we would not be here today, we wouldn't waste this money and the time to debate because there'd be no purpose at all.

Now, when I said that my honourable friend was candid when he said, "All right, it's a new government. Before when we were in opposition this was not one of our pet projects. We did not feel that government should be that involved. We were very close to the dentists that were coming to us and complaining to us, and the dentists" — I should say the Association because, as I said this morning, the union part of it, and I don't fault the dentists at all or their union, I don't fault them at all, but the people of Manitoba would fault us if because a professional or somebody that is in the upper bracket of financial revenue for the year, and whenever they wanted anything if we just automatically caved in. This is not our job, and I think that we should be respected also, and I think that we have to exercise the responsibility that we have.

So the Minister repeatedly stated that he didn't doubt my word, that I felt that I'd gone to the profession, but in his mind that wasn't good enough because they weren't given a chance. And I categorically deny that, Mr. Chairman. I've tabled many of the documents. I've had over a period of over a year, a year and a half or so, dozens of meetings with these people myself. There must have been over a hundred meetings of our staff, with dentists, with everybody, we even sent people to New York to see one of the experts out there, and all that information — we've had people coming in from different provinces, and every single one of the persons that we talked to, including my staff then which is the Minister's staff now, and I'm not trying to put anybody on the spot, felt that there was only one way, and that we were going in the right way.

Now, when I became the Minister one of the first things that happened was that I was seen with — by then, anyway, a personal friend of mine, who was I think president of the association, came over to see me and asked me if there was any chance, so I felt well, of course, you know, life doesn't stop, I told him that the Cabinet was leaning towards the Saskatchewan plan. I made no bones about that. I told him that, and I said I am ready to talk to see if we can come to something and then I'll go to Cabinet and see what there is to do. I went to my Leader who was the Premier of the province and I said to him, "Let's wait a little while just to see if something comes out of that." And that is not the first time and the only time that happened. As I said just yesterday or the day before when we were talking about the new centre for the children, we made an announcement and at the request of the Children's Aid Society we reviewed and we were ready to change it. So this is something that we did. Now I told him that definitely we liked, and the former Minister had liked — he had visited, he was very familiar with the Saskatchewan plan, and he was leaning towards the Saskatchewan plan.

Then the next question I asked him is this: "Do you believe that this is just for show, or do you believe that I'm sincere, because if you don't, don't waste your time and don't waste my time and let's have the battle right now." He assured me that he knew me well enough that he believed that I was sincere.

He then asked me, "Could we, while this is going on, could we have a pilot project, could we deliver the service our way to show you what we could do?" I said, "Absolutely, why don't you develop that and give it to me, and I guarantee that this will be done, we'll work on that." That was never done.

Then as we went along and we had meetings after meetings. I finally said to them sometime along the road, because the government, like my honourable friend reminds us so often, the government has the mandate to decide, you know, and it's odd that when members of this government whether it's their mandate or it's their right, and the public give them that — when it's on our side it's confrontation, and we're not responsible, and we want to fight with everybody. And I don't think that's fair, and I think this sort of thing is why the people don't respect politicians probably because there's not honesty between the two camps, and I'm not blaming one side more than the other but this is apparently what's going on and that's the way politics are and I suppose I'm naive in saying what I'm saying now.

Then I finally said to them, "Well, all right, we can't go on forever, so there will be given on

certain things that we make up our minds; if we cannot negotiate any more we'll have to tell you. Okay." Finally there were three given, one of them that definitely we were satisfied that we were going to use dental nurses. My honourable friend, the present Minister, said before the lunch hour he didn't have to debate that. He was satisfied with the quality of work of the dental nurses — and I hope I'm not misquoting him — so then he must accept one of the given. This was not accepted. Privately some of the dentists told me, "Yes, we can change this", but there was a motion at the meeting of the Dental Association and that was refused. They were not accepted or recognized.

Secondly, on the initial visit, the only way that we would deal with the dental profession — and I can't see any other way, Mr. Chairman — it would be ridiculous to deal any other way, on the initial, if any dentists wanted to come and work part-time, give some of his time, and so on, it would be on sessional fees. I hope the Minister is following me. That is the initial meeting with the dental nurses, and so on, that the doctor was there, he'd have so many hours that he would work and the kids would be brought in from the schools, and so on, that was a given.

The third given, a very important given, that after all the meetings that we had we were convinced that we were right, was that in general the program would be brought to the kids, to the students. That is, that we would deliver the service from the schools. Those were the three givens and they did not accept them, so, therefore, you have a confrontation.

It was our mandate; we tried everything; even sent the gentleman sitting in front of you to Swan River a couple of times to try to deal with the dentists. I made the statement that if there were some, if there was the space, and if there were dental offices that were large enough that would be fairly close to the schools, of course, we would not build all that in the schools.

I would say that this dentist wasn't interested. We wrote letters. He never answered. He wasn't interested, he was too busy. All right, that's the situation.

We said that we would co-operate with them as much as possible, that we would go ahead and — of course, there are referrals to them — and we would negotiate fees. We set up a committee to negotiate with them on fees. Mr. Cherniack — and he can cover that if he wants — and of course we tried, we were representing the people of Manitoba, and we tried to have the best possible fees and I think that we were fair. In fact, I think that Mr. Cherniack spent a lot of time on that, he wasn't paid for that at all, he did the work at my request. I think he knew the score and we'd met with some of the representatives of the dental profession, and the expert that they had working for him — I don't know his title, this fellow from Toronto — that impressed me very much.

Then they brought in a report that I don't know how they could make work. They warned us not to let this thing go out of hand like Medicare — they were knocking Medicare, the way it was, that it was too costly. They gave us some figures that we did not accept, that there would be enough dentists, that there were enough dentists. They also stated, which I don't think it was their right; it's something that I would like to see looked at and I think it is the right of the public, though, that a dentist, he would graduate, he would be given his licence to practise under certain conditions. Some of the conditions were that he would spend a certain time up north, or in the remote areas, or areas where there were no dentists, which we felt that at this time it would be very hard to work, because I think that was tried with the medical profession in B.C. and it didn't work. I think the court or the Human Rights Committee turned it down.

So, Mr. Chairman, we did negotiate with the dentists. We did everything that we could to work with them. But they decided they were fighting, it was obvious, it was a public plan against a private plan. I stated in this House, and I stated outside this House, and I'm repeating now, that there was no ideology hangups as far as I was concerned, as far as the government of the day was concerned. We wanted to give the service.

Now the Minister tells me, "Well, I'm not committed to these people." Well, I doubt that. Maybe not the Minister himself, but the Cabinet certainly was; and I know the publicity of that union during the campaign, before the campaign, and the commitment that they said was made to them, I know that.

I feel that the Minister has repeatedly — well at the request of the dentists — I challenge the Minister to tell me now that if he had one single — not two, not three, not five — one single letter from any parents that knocked this program. If he has, I'd like to see a copy of that. It's possible that he has; certainly nobody is perfect.

Now, my honourable friend, he never mentioned the parents at all except when he says, "Well, this is the way we're going to judge this pilot project." But he mentioned the dental profession many times. Well, I've got news for the Minister; I don't think it is the elected people, or the government of the day's duty to worry about — I shouldn't say worry — but I mean their main

concern is not to generate more revenue for any dental profession. I would like to see the day that we don't need dentists or doctors. I know it's impossible. —(Interjection)— I beg your pardon? That's right. The Minister said that. But he said the reason why they changed this program was because of the request and because the dentists said that they weren't given a chance. But he didn't say at the time what he heard from the parents, or the school divisions and so on, he didn't say that at all.

Now, I wouldn't fight. I would argue with the Minister maybe, and say, "Well, this is a good program." But I could understand if the Minister would say, "Well, we've got priorities. We want to watch. We're not going to move in this; we're going to drag our feet a bit. We're going to stay at the level that you're doing." In fact, the Minister said that on all the other programs, "We're not going to move too much and we're going to see."

Everything being equal, I wouldn't even quarrel if the Minister would say, "Okay, we're going to let them have a pilot project." But I mean, something that you can compare and the Minister knows as well as I, that you're not going to be any further ahead once you see what's happened in that area. The Minister then made a statement that the public had to be involved in this program, that he could not see the day where it could be just the private sector alone, but it comes to the same thing, of this great free enterprising system that the government will pay the shot, but then it will be administered only by the medical profession because that's exactly what they want and that's all they want. They wanted to keep this a private program.

Now, the thing that I'm concerned about is, it is obvious to the people of Manitoba just the same as it is to the member of this House, that this is the beginning of the end. You know the Minister said, "Well, \$50.00 might be too much." I don't quarrel with that. It might be that you say, "Well, that's a good program and I believe that the Minister thinks it is." But it is too much, too expensive for the people of Manitoba. I would respect that. I would respect that. But now he feels that no matter what's going to happen, it's going to cost at least \$50.00, I don't know where he got this information, it's going to be \$50.00, and that is too rich. He said that this morning. We can't afford \$9 million, \$10 million, and I don't think that that is going to change. It might change initially and especially for somebody you've seen, people that are competing. You know, the first time, not to let anybody come in in what they feel is their field, they might say, "Well, all right, we're going to do it for so much." In fact, even people who are bidding on contracts do the same thing, and when the opposition is gone they say, "Well, we had this and we had that. We didn't know. Here, we can prove to you that we're losing money," and that would be changed.

You can't tell me, Sir, I mean we all know and I'm not criticizing, but I know, I'm aware of what it costs to go to the dentist. You can't tell me, Sir, that if they're going to do the work that the dental nurses are doing — and they're not going to do it any better — if they're going to do that work, well, then it's going to be costlier.

Of course, when you look at hiring people, developing a program, a lot of that has been done already, a lot of that has been done already, and these people are in place, and we've been fortunate with the kind of people who we've had to run this department. I don't think we could have done better anywhere in Canada, with the selection that we have. I'm very happy about that. But the Minister said, "Well, no, we won't start from scratch." Can you tell me, anybody in their right mind, that when they accepted, when they were recruited, they accepted to take this course thinking that there was a future for them, and maybe that they could do something; maybe they didn't have quite the education, there was a subject missing; they couldn't be nurses — and there's a lot of people that like to work and help their fellow citizens. And there was a chance, and they were very happy, and they were doing good work, those that we had. And all of a sudden, to say, "Well, I can't guarantee a job." Mind you, I'm pleased that the Minister has changed his mind and said that he will pay for the second year, he will honour the second year of tuition of those that are —(Interjection)— Well, then you've got somebody in your department that's doing a hell of a good job of flying kites, because on every issue, kites are being flown. And this was exactly, and that was reported after a discussion that the Minister had with the press, that he couldn't guarantee any jobs, not —(Interjection)— Yes, and I agree with that; there is no way that he can, and legally he can't — that he would do his utmost to try to find them a job, and I congratulate him for that.

The report at the time was that for the first year the people would have their course . . . Mr. Chairman, I don't think that the Minister will be able to recruit any. Now, I have what I think is a compromise, a fair compromise. I think that the Minister — it wouldn't cost that much money; in fact, what you spend now would not be wasted, and the Minister says that, well, this — what is it? Is it Turtle Mountain, or what's that division? — said at their request. But there are others

that requested to go in the government's plan. And wouldn't it be nice, and it wouldn't be that costly, and then I would believe in the Minister, in his sincerity, a heck of a lot more, if he said, all right, and he has the staff that could do that, if he said, all right, we'll go ahead and we will not accept any more. We'll tell Regina we're not going to develop any more, but those that will graduate, those that will finish, we will occupy them; we'll open another district. I think this would be in the right way, if you could. In other words, employ those 36 or 37 — they might not all graduate — employ them and then stop there, and be satisfied and then even give the dental group another comparable district where you can compare. If that was done, then I would understand because then you're not stopping everything; the people would be satisfied; these people would be assured of a job.

Now, the Minister said they will work with the dentists and he had a little slip there — what did he say? He said, "No doubt that it will . . ." and then he said, "Well, maybe they will." But, "no doubt," you know, it seems like a slip. The dentists do not recognize these people, and I say to the Minister, I have no doubt that in order to keep that the Minister could go to the dental profession or the association and say, "Listen fellows, these guys are giving us a hard time, and politically that can't be done. You've got to take care of these nurses," and they will pay their salary. But they will become glorified dental technicians again. They will do a lot of the work, mind you, but this is what they're going to become. They won't have that professional thing.

And you know, the Minister said that there was a confrontation, and I covered that point. I said the confrontation, when the government of the day finally decide, and they must decide because then we'd say, no leadership in that department, no leadership in this government. And I said that we were ready to discuss everything and anything. We had another committee to discuss the standards and we've had trouble getting the part of the medical profession on that, and I think it's working well now. All right. And if that is the situation, well, of course, then any professional group who certainly have been able to manipulate or work, have other paramedical groups working under them, have been happy. And it's worked like that and not one that I know of comes willingly and says, "These people are strong enough now" — individually, but not an association until they were forced to do so. It even started like that with the medical profession themselves; they were looked at as if they were — what? witches, when this first started. They weren't recognized. And then the nurses, the nurses were stooges for awhile until they got strong enough and they had their association. And never would you think of a nurse-practitioner; now the people think it's a good idea. And the chiropractors, you know, that was very very bad; that was resisted they were chastized by their association, mind you, but individually some of the doctors referred some of their patients for certain things to chiropractors. And I do think that you shouldn't let anybody practice or deliver a service that he's not qualified to give; there's no battle there at all. And my battle has never been and will not be with any professional association. But they have their responsibility, they are fighting to keep the control. You know, there's not only government control, there is association control.

The day that I was elected, and when I had a responsibility, I tried to also look at the best way to deliver the service, to occupy as many people, and then to cut down on the cost of health care. And I say, if the Minister would only do that and say, "All right, this year we're going to do just enough, what we can deliver without recruiting anybody but those that we've already recruited and have taken the course in Regina." And if he says next year the same thing — he might open the odd place — and I say to the Minister, he might have the most fantastic plan; he could stop it because it is too high and say, "We've made the resolution, the decision that it's not going to be universal," and he'll have a fight on his hands by this party, of course. We're in opposition and we feel it's a good program. But eventually, if that's what the government wants, they will win and then they will be . . . They will not lose the whole ballgame; they will not lose the money and the labour and the work that's gone into organizing this program, preparing this program, and also the people that can be productive and that have been duly trained and qualified for this service, and it might be one or two school divisions more.

I say to the Minister that would probably be a very good decision and he will be very pleased if he listens to me and if he accepts the suggestion, because you haven't got enough interest in the rural area. Let's say keep out of Winnipeg, if you don't want. I think that it should be universal. I'm certainly not changing my mind; I think that if it is I doubt that it would be that high, because the more people you have, the longer you're in business, it's going to cost an awful lot less. And then if you can go exactly on what you've been preaching about the prevention and so on, you use the same clinics in the school. One day you have the dental nurses coming in and maybe the

next month in the same school you have somebody come and test the ears and then the eyes and so on. And then you're going to have a group, a generation of people that will be able to know how to take care of themselves, keep their health, that will be better students, and I think the money that you spend, it'll be certainly a good investment.

Well if at least if the Minister could say, "Okay, we'll look at that and next year we will look at the areas where there is no dentist, where it's difficult." You know, not too long ago we said that there would be a — what is it for battered children? — the Child Abuse Centre, mostly in Winnipeg because of the jungle, and so on. Well, all right, that's fine. Now maybe we can do something for the area that has been, through no fault of anybody maybe, through no fault of theirs, that are not getting the service delivered as well as the others, especially in this province where you have Medicare, there is no premium, so it comes from taxpayers' money, so it's a contract with the people of Manitoba and you should deliver the service. It will always be impossible to deliver the service as well in some remote area as you do in Winnipeg, around the cities.

So you know it wouldn't be the end of the world. It wouldn't break any government to say, "Okay, we're going to go ahead this year. Then we'll expand by just what can be delivered by the nurses, and we'll have to do the same thing next year." As I say, I think it would be money well spent, and I think that the Minister would be pleased to have this safeguard. Or at least, he doesn't even have to say yes now. He can say, "Well, that will be something that we will be considering and we'll keep in touch with those nurses. We'll encourage them. I've already announced that we will pay their tuition, and so on, the same way as it was before. I've already announced that. And next year I will see what's going on and I will talk to my colleague, and it might be that we will do that."

And then he has not stopped, he hasn't just put on the brakes and started going in reverse with this idea and stacked the plan, the pilot project of the Dental Association. In fact, if he wants to, as I said, bring another area and give it to the Dental Association, I have no squawk. As I said, I've asked them to develop that before. I'm convinced that they can't do it as cheaply because of those three givens and that's the only thing. If there's a confrontation, if you call that a confrontation, yes, there is a confrontation and there is already a confrontation between them and you and you know now, if you didn't know before, because you told me that you did not — excuse me, Mr. Chairman, — the Minister told the House that as far as he's concerned, let us not debate the issue, that he's satisfied with the quality of work that is being performed by the dental nurses.

So, I don't know, maybe the Minister could comment at this time, even if he doesn't give us an answer and say, well, we will look at that in the next few weeks and I'm kind of confident because I know the way the staff felt, I know what they've said to me, and I know that they know what we've done with the profession and I'm surprised because I know the Minister has confidence in his staff and I'm surprised that he comes here today and said, "Well, maybe you're sincere; maybe you believe that, but we have reason to believe that you didn't play ball with them, that it was window dressing," because he has all the facts and the mail and the correspondence and the advice of his present staff. I know how they felt and I know that they knew what went on. I certainly know that. I think that in the department I was the one that was more inclined to go with the dentists of anybody including Cabinet and staff in the department if there should be said.

So, as I say, the Minister is saying, "We have to take it easy; it's going to cost money." I won't argue with him at this point and especially this year. It might be that next year . . . because I might happen to think that this is a good program, also there are other priorities. If I'm going to be candid, I think I'd have to say that. There was a program that I inherited; I'm not knocking it, I think it's a good program, not necessarily make this one universal before we do more of other programs. I think that in a private discussion that we have had, I think I even said that to the Minister so I would understand that.

But now it seems to me if there is any window dressing, — and the Minister must forgive me because he feels the same about me — but I feel that he is, so for what he said today, that he's just giving us window dressing, that it was a predetermined thing because of the dentists. I don't think that the dental profession really understands. I think that there's always — I'm talking about the rank and file, the members of the profession. There are many people in any group that they are pretty militant people and that's their job, I don't criticize them at all and they feel that this is something that's slipping away from us. If anything, you would generate more work for the dental profession because the people would learn to take care of themselves. Even in the booklet the department — and I didn't hear that the department was withdrawing these books — eh? —(Interjection)— Well, okay, so then could the Minister consider that? Could that be some kind

of a compromise without making a formal commitment today, to say, "Okay, I'm going to look at that, and I'll decide fairly soon because it's not fair to keep these people guessing and I will talk to these nurses and it might be that I will next year or in two years from now, I will look to see where it's needed the most and I will bring another school division in," because they've requested, they have as much right as Turtle Mountain. And maybe even say to the Dental Association, "Well, you run another area." Then the Minister can decide; the Minister can cancel the whole program when he has that, could go to the private plan, if that is his wish, could go to the public plan or to have a mixture and I wouldn't be adverse to that, to see a mixture, if it could work, to see a mixture. As I said, I can't see getting away from these three givens. I don't think, I'd like to be proven wrong, I don't think you'll have the same utilization, if you want to be honest and calculate that fairly and honestly, I don't think you'll have the same utilization if you insist that the people go to the dentist's office because it hasn't been, other provinces have tried that, it doesn't work like that.

You've got in one of these books that you're giving out now, that many of the people of Manitoba have never seen a dentist. Now once they do that they will know how important it is to keep your teeth in good shape and, if anything, you'll have more work for the dentists so let's not worry about the dentists losing anything. So I would hope that the Minister, even if he doesn't. . . I would like to of course have him get up and say, "Okay, we'll do that," but I would hope that he'll at least consider it and then he might be able to move in the direction that he wanted. I don't think it's going to cost him that much and there won't be any waste of the things that were done already. Of these 36, or there might be less that graduate, there might be others that leave of those that he has now, and then he might say, "Okay, we'll try that, we won't waste anything, but I serve notice now that it's not going to be universal at this time." I would go along with that 100 percent, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. SHERMAN: Well, Mr. Chairman, I find it very difficult to make the distinction between what the Honourable Member for St. Boniface is asking me to say and to do and what I've already said and what I've already told him I'm doing or we are doing as a government. I really find it difficult to make the distinction. I think that the things that he has said and suggested we should be doing and I should be looking at and looking into as Minister, we are doing and I am looking at and looking into. The Member for St. Boniface is a pessimist, Mr. Chairman, he's a pessimist. If I gave him a half glass of whiskey, to him it's half empty; to me it's half full.

MR. DESJARDINS: On a point of order, would the Minister try it please?

MR. SHERMAN: I will, Mr. Chairman, at 4:31. The Member for Seven Oaks wants the other half.

A MEMBER: That's the empty half.

MR. SHERMAN: Well now that makes me a pessimist. No, I take a more optimistic view. I am sure that when the Honourable Minister for St. Boniface was Minister he thought that he could work things out. He had confidence that he could work things out and he worked them out as best he could, and he has some achievements that he can point to with satisfaction and pride. I would expect that he would grant me the same faith or confidence in my own capacities. I am confident that I can work things out in the course of the next few months that will enable us to do precisely what the Member for St. Boniface has referred to and what I thought I had outlined in my earlier remarks. I know the value of good dental health and preventive dental medicine and the qualities of the dental nurses that are coming out of this course. I don't think we have to rehash that.

The Member for St. Boniface doesn't have to sell me on the concept of the program. I have admitted that I started out by being in favour and still am in favour of a children's dental health program.

Now the Member for St. Boniface says that the Minister should say, "Look, we don't have much money this year, we have got certain priorities, we have got certain restraints, but we are going to do just a little bit more, we are going to do what we can. We are going to offer opportunities to the student nurses who are coming out of school this June." That is precisely what we have done. We have said although there is no geographic expansion except for Turtle Mountain which can be done for a minimal amount of money and to go into the other divisions that were on the

projected list for this fiscal year would have cost substantially more money, there is age expansion, which permits the absorption of and the successful and positive application of, those 28 nurses coming out of Regina this June into the program. —(Interjection)— The honourable member says, "Extend it to the other 37." I said to him this morning that although I cannot give them an airtight guarantee, I will give them my pledge that I am working hard to produce a program that will enable me to do that for them in a very few weeks time. But I cannot give them that program chapter and verse at the moment.

MR. DESJARDINS: But you said this morning to work in the dentist's office.

MR. SHERMAN: Absolutely.

MR. DESJARDINS: Well, that is not what I heard you say.

MR. SHERMAN: Not necessarily. What I said, Mr. Chairman, was to work in the dentists's offices if that is where they want to work, what I said was to utilize their capabilities up to the degree to which they have been qualified. In other words, I am not looking for a program where the dentists say, "Okay, we accept the dental nurses and we'll take them," but then they will have to do some menial job. I want a program that utilizes them to the capabilities to which they have been trained.

It is taking a little time to go through the formulation process, and I am sure the Member for St. Boniface, more than anybody in this House, would appreciate that fact.

I take great hope from developments in the Province of Saskatchewan, and I don't know whether the Member for St. Boniface is familiar with proposed legislation in Saskatchewan governing dental nurses, but there is some proposed in that province now that offers substantial guidelines of hope and optimism for me and our government, and the Member for St. Boniface, and everybody here in Manitoba interested in our program. The legislation, although only proposed at this juncture, is based on agreements that have been worked out with the Saskatchewan College of Dental Surgeons and, Sir, as near as my officials and I can assess it, it would do a number of things including permit dental nurses to work in private practicing dentists' offices, if they wished, performing those procedures for which they are trained. That includes the cutting, filling, and extracting of certain teeth. The dentist would be restricted to having no more than one dental nurse to one dentist. In other words, dentists couldn't merchandise dentistry for children by having one dentist supervise a whole stable of nurses. The dentist could charge the same fee for procedures performed by dental nurses as they do for services performed by themselves. The Dental College would amend its bylaws to recognize and accept the existence of dental nurses and the procedures they perform.

In all, this would seem to indicate that the dental profession in Saskatchewan has accepted the dental nurse concept and in effect the dental nursing profession will be controllable by the Saskatchewan College of Dentistry.

Now the Member for St. Boniface knows better than I do and has made reference to the fact, that there has been confrontation and suspicion initiated by the dental profession collectively itself, and I am not sensitive about making that statement. I think the profession would have to admit it, where the dental nurse concept is concerned. The dentists professionally, collectively as a professional group have not been enthusiastic about accepting the concept of the dental nurse. They have been lukewarm to that concept at best and perhaps vigorously opposed to it at worst.

The situation has reached a point in Saskatchewan where the profession, where the college, has come round to acceptance and a welcome to the dental nurse and the dental nurse concept apparently, and I believe the same thing can and will take place here. But I started in a situation just as the Member for St. Boniface when he became Minister stepped into situations that were ready-made, and it took him time to effect his influences and make his efforts felt to produce some changes. I stepped into a situation where there was a cold war between the dental profession and the dental nurse and a suspicion on the part of the dentist of the dental nurse and that concept. You don't change those things overnight. You change them through familiarization and education and co-operation and consultation. That is the course that I have been following. I am absolutely confident and I have had conversations with the executive of the Dental Association as recently as the past 24 hours, that we are moving into a climate that will enable us to work much more quickly towards a positive proposal that would enable us to build the private profession into the plan now existing with total recognition of and full utilization of those dental nurses, not only this year's graduating class, but next year's graduating class.

All I am saying to the honourable member is, I can't give next year's graduating class that

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this afternoon. It would be irresponsible of me. I don't have the thing worked out yet, but I am absolutely confident that it will be worked out. I need a little more time on it.

So I say the difference between the Honourable Member for St. Boniface and me is that he is a pessimist. He sees this as a retrenchment. He sees this as a course of action that leads to a dead end. I say that that is not the case. I am optimistic about it and I have reason to be optimistic about, because of the meetings and consultations I have held and because of the events taking place in Saskatchewan, and the members of the government, my colleagues, are in full accord with the course that I am pursuing. They support the concept of the program. It has been a collective decision to take the necessary steps to accommodate the dental nurses graduating this year and they are expecting me to produce a proposal that will enable us to accommodate those who graduate next year.

That is one of my primary targets for the next few weeks and I look forward as much as the Member for St. Boniface does to being able to make that announcement sooner rather than later. It is just that I can't make it this afternoon.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. I would like to direct the honourable members' attention to the lounge on my left where we have visiting Mr. David Orlikow, Member of Parliament for Winnipeg North, and I would ask you to join me in offering him a welcome to our Legislature.

The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, thank you. I join you in welcoming my Member of Parliament to come and see how we operate at this level. It's been some time since he was a member of this group and I'm not sure that it has been elevated since he was a member. It probably has deteriorated to some extent but that's because of new people that have come in. —(Interjection)— Because I took his place. He was formerly the Member for St. Johns. All right, I accept that.

Mr. Chairman, I hope that I can ask very short questions and elicit replies of the same length from the Honourable Minister. I am interested in the program, the Turtle Mountain pilot project, and appreciate what the member had to say about that program. He indicated a \$125 per child per year and cost he said it consisted of two visits. Could he indicate how he means two visits when there may be extensive work to be done for any one child? Could he also indicate how many dentists there are doing that work?

MR. CHAIAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. SHERMAN: The reference to the numeral 2 should be applied to the term "examinations," Mr. Chairman, two examinations, the results of those examinations could produce many more visits for individual children who need extra work and follow-up work done so it won't . . .

MR. CHERNIACK: They would pay for it?

MR. SHERMAN: Yes, it won't work out to . . .

MR. DESJARDINS: Would it be the same dentist generating revenue?

MR. SHERMAN: Well, the work that they would need done would be done under the appropriation that is being supplied to that program.

MR. DESJARDINS: Then they'd be referrals.

MR. SHERMAN: No.

MR. DESJARDINS: Yes, they would have to be referrals.

MR. SHERMAN: They would go to the dentist, they would be guaranteed two examinations by the dentist and follow-up work that was needed.

The honourable member asked me how many dentists are involved. There are supposed to be three dentists involved. There are two at the moment who are committed to the program and the Dental Association is recruiting a third one to fit into that project.

MR. CHAIAN: The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, could I ascertain what is the per capita cost of the program that is being provided through the government program?

MR. SHERMAN: Well, the broad calculation that I think has been sort of generally accepted, at

least for the first year or two of the government program, was \$250, a per capita cost of \$250.00. However, I recognize, as does the Honourable Member for St. Johns, that that included equipment costs, start-up costs, the seed money associated with any program of this kind. I believe the projections of our officials, our government officials, in this branch and in this service are that total utilization on the total age parameters that are projected ultimately for the program, that is, every Manitoba child from age 3 to age 12, inclusive, would bring that unit cost down, that per capita cost down to the neighbourhood of \$70.00. Is that correct? That's the long-range projection.

MR. CHERNIACK: Would the honourable member then agree that just about all the publicity that came from the dentists related the \$250 per capita cost as being the cost per capita without all the explanations that the Minister has just given to us, that is, that the public were made to believe that the cost per capita would be \$250 per child, would that be a correct assumption?

MR. SHERMAN: Well, I can't suggest to the Honourable Member for St. Johns what he should assume. If he assumes that he was made to believe that by whom, or whomever — only he could say — then that's his right. My understanding is that most discussions that have taken place inside this Chamber, on most debates that took place on the program from the time of its introduction in this House, all that was offered was an approximation in the neighbourhood of \$250 as the per capita cost.

MR. CHERNIACK: Now that the Minister indicates that it is expected that the cost will average at \$70.00 per capita, how does he rationalize that cost with the \$125 per capita under the program?

MR. SHEAN: I'm sorry, I missed the . . . Was the honourable member referring to the Turtle Mountain project?

Well, Mr. Chairman, the honourable member's question was how do I rationalize or how do I justify \$125 in Turtle Mountain as against the total figure of \$70.00? In the first place, the \$125 in Turtle Mountain is a maximum figure. It might not be that high but that's the maximum that is permissible. In the second place, it's a new project, it's a new program, and the Dental Association itself projects that on full utilization on the same parameters that I referred to earlier, that they could bring the ultimate unit cost down to approximately \$50.00.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, I am under the impression that the Minister said that the \$32,500 which amounts to approximately \$125 per capita — is that correct so far, that arithmetic, per child — will be for two visits plus all resultant treatment that is necessary and other members on this side had the impression that it's only for the two visits and that the parents will be billed for the treatment that is resultant. Could the Minister clarify that?

MR. SHERMAN: Well, the parents aren't billed in any case, Mr. Chairman, the school division is billed, the plan is billed. The amount of money that is being provided by the taxpayers to fund the school division to provide the plan through the Association will permit two examinations for every child and follow-up work where it's necessary, where follow-up work is necessary for individuals among those children, that will be included in the service provided.

MR. CHERNIACK: Well, Mr. Chairman, does that make up the total of \$32,500 and the dentists guarantee to manage the program for that cost for the year?

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, it could work out to more than \$32,500.00. If it does, the dentists will have to make up the difference.

MR. CHERNIACK: Could the Honourable Minister supply us with a fee schedule that will be payable to the dentists for the work that they do?

MR. SHERMAN: I'm sure I can, Mr. Chairman, I don't have it in front of me. The Dental Association and the school division are working out the project right now and I don't have the final form of it in front of me. It's supposed to go into place on September 1st but I'm sure I can provide the honourable member with that schedule.

MR. CHERNIACK: What method is the Honourable Minister going to carry out in order to satisfy himself as to the quality of the provision of service. In other words, at what stage will the children's requirements be checked?

MR. SHERMAN: Well, that's a good question that is not answered at the moment, Mr. Chairman,

that's still part of the discussion with respect to the pilot project that's taking place within the Dental Association itself and which my department will be very interested in studying when it's presented to us in final form. But, in essence, I would have to suggest to the honourable member that essentially the dentist, the professional, will be assuming that responsibility. Presumably, if there is dissatisfaction on the part of the parents of the children, they will hear about it, the school division will hear about it and we will hear about it. But certainly my position at this juncture is that if the dental profession is undertaking it, and they are professionals and with professional ethics — which I'm sure my honourable friend respects — that we would expect them to perform to the 100 percent capacity of their professional qualifications.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, I understood the Minister to say that his department will be monitoring the utilization and the cost-effectiveness and the quality of the work. Now, how are they going to do that? I mean, is the Minister going to monitor it or has he now contracted the monitoring out to the dentists along with the program?

MR. SHERMAN: We're going to monitor it, Mr. Chairman, but I doubt that we'll be able to draw conclusive evaluations until close to the end of the year that it is in place. Before we can draw conclusions as to utilization and as to the degree of satisfaction on the part of the parents and the children, the project will have to have been under way for several months. At that juncture, after it's been in place several months, we will be, through the school division, requesting response from the families being served and that will be a factor that will be evaluated and monitored. But I would expect that I would not be able to present the honourable member with the definitive conclusions until the end of the year.

MR. CHERNIACK: Well, Mr. Chairman, then the Minister says that, as I understand or interpret what he has said, that they will be relying largely on a questionnaire to parents. Mr. Chairman, I would then ask, to what extent there will be a professional review or overview of the work that is being done, will there be any and if so, by whom?

MR. SHEAN: The supervision under the present program is carried out by dentists, performed by dentists. Obviously the honourable member feels that since he was one of the architects or contributing architects to the present program, he feels that the dentists have a supervisory capacity so I fail to see how he could question their qualifications for doing the work that they would be doing in this pilot project. If he's asking me whether there will be an authoritative body set up through the Dental Association to over-supervise the work of the practitioners, I can't answer that question at this juncture but I can assure the honourable member that the Manitoba Dental Association, as such, as a body of professionals will be examining and evaluating exhaustively the results of the pilot project and it will certainly take into account the quality of professional work and the satisfaction of the children being served and their parents. That will be done through the Manitoba Dental Association.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the Honourable Minister for attributing to me a participation in the program which I don't really deserve. He's described me as being one of the architects, the fact is I was not. I would have liked to have taken the credit for it but I was just used in order to negotiate with the dentists for a fee and the fact is that I didn't succeed so that I can't even take credit for carrying out the task allotted to me. But, meanwhile, I did have an opportunity to discuss with dentists their attitude to the program which the province was planning.

The Minister then gives the impression that it will be up to the dental profession to satisfy itself as to the quality of the service provided by the members and I think in addition to that, it would appear that there will be — and I used the word before — a questionnaire to the parents: Are you satisfied? u

Would the Honourable Minister be able to indicate to me the extent to which parents are now satisfied not to send their children to a dentist at all? I think it can be recognized that there are a very large number of parents who don't bother to send their children to dentists at all, and who must feel that it's a satisfactory situation, that there is no real need to go. We all know that people don't die from dental caries or from dental problems, and aided by the fact that there seems to be some unreasonable and unnatural fear of dentists, suggests to people that they should avoid going to the dentist, rather than take advantage of the services of such a person, so I don't give much weight to the responses given by parents as to whether or not they are satisfied. I suppose they are satisfied if the children don't stay up at night crying. But at this age, I doubt if that's so

much the problem; it's more a question of prevention — long-range prevention as was described by the Honourable the Member for Logan.

That being the case, I believe that what the Minister is really saying, really saying, is that the dental profession is expected to report on the success of their program in this pilot project. And if that's the case, let's say that's the situation, then we will go on from there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. SHERMAN: Well, Mr. Chairman, naturally I couldn't give the honourable member a specific percentage but I would suspect that there is a fairly substantial percentage of parents in Manitoba, or in any jurisdiction in any society, who are satisfied not to send their children to the dentist at all. That is something that I'm sure we all deplore.

The pilot project, in contemplation, in formulation will be designed to challenge that disinterest as effectively and as intensively as possible within the free society concept. Nobody associated with the pilot project is going to be forcing parents to take their children to the dentist, but the dentists undertake as part of their responsibility with which they are charged under the pilot project the requirement of notification and follow-up notice to ensure that the parents are not only made aware but are vigorously encouraged to have their children take advantage of the program opportunity.

Now, short of some measure of force or compulsion, there is not much else that we can do. I think the implications of the honourable member's questions to me are that this idea of a privately operated plan is shot full of pitfalls and potential weaknesses and is not a good idea. That's one reason why we want to try the pilot project in a division that said they didn't want the government plan but they would like a children's dental health program. What better opportunity to test the sincerity and the commitment of the professionals to deliver on a plan such as this?

Now, at the end of the year, we know exactly how many six-year-olds and seven-year-olds there are in Turtle Mountain School Division and we know exactly how many parents there are. At the end of the year, we can evaluate the utilization. If the utilization is low, then that raises very serious questions about the usefulness of the private profession in a concept of this kind. If the utilization is high, then I think we explore what other school division in the province the private profession may be invited to enter into and serve next.

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

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Minister, I'm sure, is aware of the study that was made in Saskatchewan by three outside dentists and the fact that they had examined some 410 children and looked at the amalgam restoration and stainless steel crowns that were done and they assessed the quality of them under terms of unacceptable, adequate and superior. It seems that in those cases there was a very direct study made and I am wondering whether the Minister is prepared to have the Turtle Mountain program evaluated in the same way, and at the same time, set up a control group in another part of the province under the present provincial program, in order to measure the quality that comes out of each of the two programs so that we could have an objective review of the value of the work done.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I think that's a good suggestion. Saskatchewan used outside experts, outside consultants, to produce the evaluative results and others to which the honourable member has referred. We could certainly bring in outside experts to monitor the pilot project, and we could bring them in to monitor the Children's Dental Health Program currently in place. This has not been discussed with the Manitoba Dental Association but I would give the Honourable Member for St. Johns an undertaking to discuss it with them.

MR. CHERNIACK: Well, I'm glad to know that I can make a suggestion that commands the Minister's attention. May I also, then, ask the Minister when he studies the cost effectiveness, the extent to which he will make sure that he has a proper picture of the full cost? For example, he says that the fee has not yet been negotiated between the dentists and the school division. The fee schedule will be negotiated. Will it vary in any way from the fee schedule agreed upon, or which the government now has in its program? And if it is less, then would not the Minister wonder about that, in view of the fact that the fee schedule that I believe was established by the government for the government program was less than the dentists wanted? Would he then want to make sure that the dentists have agreed on a fee schedule that would be realistic in the light of what they themselves argued

should be the fee schedule when I was involved? And the reason I mention that is that they complained rather bitterly that the negotiations we had reached offered to the dentists a fee for service which was inadequate to their needs.

Now, I would expect that the fee schedule agreed upon will be at least the same, and should be more than what was established by the previous government in order to make sure that the dentists are being objective in agreeing to the fee schedule. Would the Minister care to review that portion of the fee schedule in relation to what they claimed last year would be fair, including the inflation factor, and be prepared to report whatever is possible on how realistic the fee schedule is?

The next thing I would like to know is whether the Minister will be monitoring the extent to which there is a subsidy by the Dental Association or the dentists involved. For one thing, I don't think the dentists should subsidize this program, but the Minister already said that they will subsidize it if they run over the \$32,500.00. Well, maybe on a trial period it is fair game to say, "Okay, you people have to guarantee performance at a certain price." But I don't see why the dentists, as dentists, should subsidize the program. I don't mind the dentists as taxpayers subsidizing a program but not the dentists as dentists. Therefore, I would like to protect the dentists against themselves and make sure that the Honourable Minister, in assessing this program, makes very sure that there is not a subsidy, or if there is a subsidy as part of his negotiations that the extent of the subsidy is measured in dollars and cents. Otherwise he will never know what is the true cost of the program. Is that a fair suggestion?

MR. SHEAN: Well, Mr. Chairman, I am not as concerned about the individual specifics of the fee schedule as the Honourable Member for St. Johns is. Whether certain fees for certain procedures are slightly higher or slightly lower in certain categories than those that are provided under the Children's Dental Health Program I think is a matter of splitting hairs. What the government is interested in is the fact that the MDA says that they can deliver an effective quality service to between 200 and 300 six and seven-year-olds in Turtle Mountain School Division for \$32,500.00. And the program in total — all the aspects and parameters of it that I have referred to and that the Honourable Member for St. Johns has referred to — will certainly be measured and evaluated by the MDA and by the government, by my department, at the conclusion of that project. Whether individual procedures were more or less expensive than the current program provides, I think is not that relevant. If they can do it for \$32,500; if the work is good; if the children's teeth are in good health; if the utilization is above 80 percent — although I don't want to specify that as the minimum guideline. I'm using that just in a rhetorical sense; if the parents are satisfied then I think that's the measurement that we want. Whether a particular procedure costs more or less than the current plan provides . . . —(Interjection)—

Well, I'm certainly interested in knowing what the unit cost is for effective service, and that's really the ultimate measurement. If effective satisfactory service can be provided for a unit cost that the taxpayers can afford more easily than a unit cost could be afforded under a government-run program, or any other type of program, then I think that's the measurement we're looking for. If they can't do it for that, then obviously the government-run program is the preferable one.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, this little discussion we have had and the last comments made by the Minister brings me to comments rather than questions. I've been a member of a profession for two-thirds of my life, approximately, and I have great pride in the work done by my profession and I have great respect for the work done by other professions and their dedication to service to the public. I believe the important thing for any profession that distinguishes a profession from an occupation or a vocation is the recognition that that profession, which is given the power to licence itself and to control its own members and the quality of their work, carries with it the concomitant requirement that they be dedicated to service to the public, over and above their selfish self-interest.

Having said that, Mr. Chairman, I have to tell you that in my opinion all professions risk the danger of going over the line somewhat in their efforts to maintain so high a standard that they will not permit any lessening of the standard by what they think is a lesser quality provision of services. The danger then becomes that the service is provided on a more selective basis than the selective basis usually is contrary to the best interests of the majority of people.

Therefore, Mr. Chairman, since the Minister and I and the dentists all have the same objective of providing the highest quality of service to the broadest base of the community, there should be no quarrel as to the long-range objectives of all of us. But I fear — and I say that based on my general experience and knowledge amongst professions and my more specific knowledge of my

discussions and debates with the Manitoba Dental Association representatives — that they are so concerned to maintain control over the delivery of dental services that they will do their best to prevent an effort for control and delivery of service on any other scheme other than that of the one accepted and approved by the Dental Association.

I have been careful to make a distinction between Manitoba dentists and the Manitoba Dental Association, because for some peculiar reason I have found in many professions, and I do know, Mr. Chairman, that I have spoken to representatives of — I would not exaggerate if I said 15 to 20 professions, that when you speak to them as individuals their dedication is very clear. When you speak to them as an association they become organizationally oriented and have a different kind of a language.

So, Mr. Chairman, we know what happened with the Medicare Program that was established first in Saskatchewan and is pretty well recognized in many parts of this country and of this continent, that the medical profession fought it tooth and nail lest they lose control of the delivery of services. And when we went through, and I had occasion earlier near the beginning of this Estimate's review, to refer to the experience some of us had and I recall that the First Minister and I, and I don't remember who else but maybe someone else of today's Legislature, were involved in an assessment of the denturists', the dental mechanics', demands to be given the right to provide an aspect of dental services. That the dental fraternity fought it bitterly and fought it tooth and nail, and the nails were almost as prominent as the teeth were at the time, even though many of them were false teeth. That they were claiming that there would be very serious consequences of inadequate provision of skilled services. That the supplying of dentures required such great skills that anyone with a lesser training than a dentist working in a live mouth with live tissues couldn't do a proper job, and that there would be cancer and all other kinds of horrible results — deafness, other kinds of problems arise. That the dentists fought the dental plan in Saskatchewan; are fighting the plan here, and will continue to fight the plan wherever it is proposed, in whatever province, as long as they can to maintain control over it.

Having said that, I have to say, Mr. Chairman, that again I was not involved in discussing the nature of the program with the Dental Association, only in attempting to discuss the fee schedule, but I know that the costs that they wanted to build into the fee schedule for the provision of dental services through the previous government's program were such as to cost a great deal more in the longrun. They were talking in terms of \$250 per child. They were talking in terms of the grand amount of, I think it was, several million dollars that was in the budget for this, which included a great deal of capital investment; that they were not recognizing the capital investment as being a one time expenditure, but rather giving a great deal of publicity to the that cost in relation to the cost that they said it would be if they ran the program.

I wouldn't be surprised, although I can't quote it, I wouldn't be surprised that the Honourable, the present Minister, and others of his group were accepting the dental figures, the figures supplied by the Dental Association, comparing the cost of the government program last year with their cost, accepted them as being proper, and yet we know from the Minister that it is expected that the per capita cost will be down to about \$80, or did he say \$70, \$70 and I suppose that is helped by the fact that the Saskatchewan Report, the Executive-Director's Report from Saskatchewan, was that the — well I will read that one sentence — "The increased number of children enrolled in the program combined with growing efficiencies has resulted in a reduction of the average cost per child from \$158 in the first year to \$83 in the current year despite the high rate of inflation during this two-year-period." So Saskatchewan is down to \$83 per child.

Mr. Chairman, what made this possible is good organization. It is true there was an initial capital investment, but the children were available in one group. They were examined in a rote where there was little time lost in doing that. Their treatment was to a large extent that of the dental nurses rather than the professional dentist, and there is no doubt in anybody's mind that the difference in the remuneration of the two classes of dental services, that of the dentist and the parodontal nurse, and it is apparent that unless there is a unwieldy bureaucracy and impossible cost, that the cost per child has to be less under a program that is organized in this way.

All right, the Minister said I want to see. I have got an open mind, he said. I am prepared to look at all of these things and indeed I want to. Fair game. But if he wants to do it, he must know what is the true basis of comparison between his program and that of the Turtle Mountain School Division Program. Because unless the measurements are the same, then the results will be of little consequence in evaluating it. Therefore, it is unsatisfactory, I think, for the Minister to say, "Well, we won't know for some months after the program has been brought in as to how effective it is."

Any, even amateur scientist, would recognize that the only way to judge the difference between two programs is to set certain guidelines at the beginning. At the beginning you set out objectives and you set out yardsticks, and you look at the parameters and you say on the basis of these various factors we will be able to judge a year from now what is the effectiveness of it.

Therefore, I think it is important to know the cost and it is important to know the true cost and if the dentists do subsidize the program it is important to know the extent to which they have done so. So that the Minister could come a year from now or two years from now and say, "We have had these two programs. We know the true costs and we are going to go one way or the other."

But let me tell the Honourable, the Minister, that it would be very naive of him not to maintain a completely objective and detailed review as to the difference because I can again tell him that in my opinion any group who wishes to destroy one program may help along the destruction by being overly generous in providing the other kind of program, and that wouldn't last for very long. The Minister is not that naive. As a matter of fact, he in his lifetime has been part of an industry which was involved in selling and he knows very well what loss-leaders are, I am sure. He must know a great deal about the various features that are involved in selling a product and he should be most sophisticated in recognizing that objectives often influence methods. And although I say that he and I and the dental profession all have the same objective — by that I would mean that would be the long-range — but I believe that the Dental Association's short-range objective may not be the provision of the highest quality of dental services to the children of Turtle Mountain, but rather an effort to make that program look so good as to destroy the other. And that would be a pity, because, Mr. Chairman, I really don't care how the service is performed. It would be a lot less troublesome for government to get involved and employ dentists and employ dental nurses and have a bureaucracy providing this dental service if that service were provided to all the children of Manitoba regardless of their ability to pay to make sure that they are given the finest care. If that were done then, why that's great, why should government be involved in that, Mr. Chairman. But it has to be very clearly understood that in doing so the Minister is absolutely sure that his evaluation is such as to guarantee that when he makes a decision he does it with all full knowledge and if he relies on one or other of the proponents of one or other of the system to be both the deliverer and the judge, he will be falling into a trap.

That is why I don't accept, I really don't accept his thought that we will have the dental profession review its own work and judge for itself how well it has done and report to him. Now that is a superficial way of describing what he said but it is not that far out; it's not that far out.

He has not yet indicated to us who outside of the dental profession will be monitoring the service, who will be measuring it. He has not even indicated how the cost evaluation will be judged. He has not really . . . Now I want to tell the Minister I have a great deal of respect for his sincerity and his desire to do the right thing, but I have to tell him I have not yet heard enough of the specifics of the monitoring and evaluation program to be satisfied that it will be done objectively and in the interest of the children themselves and not contracted out and that is what I fear.

The Minister is now on a pilot program basis contracting out the delivery of dental health services to these children in that division. To contract out is one thing, but to contract out the monitoring as well is to destroy the value of having a pilot program. I would like to think that the Minister recognizes that you can't do both. You can't both give the service to someone else to deliver and then say to that someone else, "Please then tell me in due course how well it has been done." That is really not the way to do it.

The Minister of Highways has lived up and I would suggest that he would not be the one who would ask a contractor who pours a highway whether or not that was good enough and then leave it at that. He has got his own inspectors who are out doing a job to make sure that the persons to whom he contracts are deliverin. And I do feel that it is even more important on a test program, on a pilot program, to make sure that the Minister has these basic fundamental yardsticks to judge and settle them in advance.

I hope the Minister can assure us he has. He hasn't assured us yet, because he has spoken in generalities and described it in such a way that — I assure him I listened carefully — he has not convinced me, and I am not hard to convince in this field if we agree on the purpose, that he has a set basis on which he is going to be able to monitor this objectively.

It seems to me, Mr. Chairman, that it is really important. It is something that is really basic to any such test.

Now the other program that has been going on, has been going on now for a year is it? —(Interjection)— Well, about a year, a year and one-half, and I don't know the extent to which the previous government set up a proper monitoring system. I hope they did, but if they didn't they

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should have, and if there isn't one then I think that we ought to be assured that the Minister has got one. Because it is still a pilot project, even the government project is still a pilot project, and on that basis there ought to be a proper evaluation established for that as well. So that although. . . Oh, I am afraid that time is running out today. I hope that the Minister will have the opportunity before the next time we meet to discuss his Estimates to tell us just what are the monitoring mechanisms that are in place now for the existing government program and what will be the monitoring mechanisms for the Turtle Mountain one, and the extent to which I may have shown certain cynicism about the dental profession, the Association's view of this program, I don't back away from it. I say that my own profession and any other profession is likely to fall into that trap, made worse sometimes by the fact that the majority of the members of the profession often do not get deeply involved in the bargaining or negotiating aspects, but leave it to a few elected members and some hired officials to carry out.

On that basis I think the Minister has to be extremely careful to make sure that he knows what are the objectives and what are the guidelines and what he is monitoring, to make sure that when we meet again the next day he will give us some description of his efforts and when we meet again next year he will be able to give us a full report on what he has been able to measure as to the quality of the service and the cost.

I think these are important. I have very little concern about the quality of service. I'm sure that the children who will be treated will be treated well. I have a much greater concern about the cost and, as the Minister said himself, about the utilization of the service to make sure that it is properly distributed amongst all the children of the . . .

Just one other thing, Mr. Chairman. I know you're about to knock the gavel on me. The Minister said this is a relatively urbanized area. I'm guessing also that it is a relatively affluent area. I think the Minister ought to take that into account in assessing it and when he sets up his control on the other side, he takes a comparable urbanized affluent area as Turtle Mountain. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In accordance with Rule 19, Section 2, I am interrupting the proceedings for Private Members' Hour and will return at the call of the Chair. The Honourable Minister of Highways.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if there is a disposition on the part of the members to . . . Well, we will bring the mace on the table.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

The Chairman reported upon the Committee's deliberations to Mr. Speaker and requested leave to sit again.

IN SESSION

MR. SPEAKER: *The Honourable Member for Radisson.*

MR. ABE KOVNATS: *Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Dauphin, that the report of the Committee be received.*

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: *The Honourable Government House Leader.*

MR. ENNS: *Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Kildonan, that the House do now adjourn.*

MOTION presented and carried and the House adjourned until 2:30 p.m., Monday afternoon.