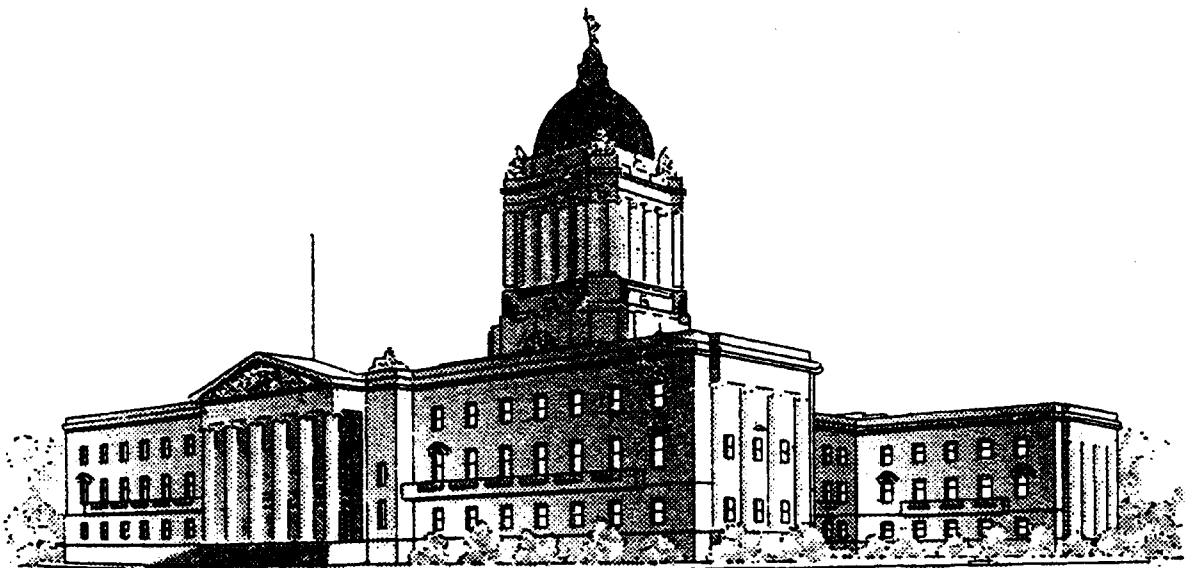




**First Session - Thirty-Sixth Legislature**  
**of the**  
**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**  
**Standing Committee**  
**on**  
**Municipal Affairs**

*Chairperson*  
*Mr. Mervin Tweed*  
*Constituency of Turtle Mountain*



**Vol. XLV No. 4 - 7 p.m., Tuesday, October 31, 1995**

**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Thirty-Sixth Legislature**

**Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Constituency</u>	<u>Party</u>
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	N.D.P.
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	N.D.P.
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	N.D.P.
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose	P.C.
DACQUAY, Louise, Hon.	Seine River	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	N.D.P.
DOER, Gary	Concordia	N.D.P.
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	P.C.
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Steinbach	P.C.
DYCK, Peter	Pembina	P.C.
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	P.C.
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	P.C.
EVANS, Clif	Interlake	N.D.P.
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	N.D.P.
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	P.C.
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	P.C.
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	N.D.P.
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	Lib.
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	P.C.
HELWER, Edward	Gimli	P.C.
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	N.D.P.
JENNISSEN, Gerard	Flin Flon	N.D.P.
KOWALSKI, Gary	The Maples	Lib.
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Lib.
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	N.D.P.
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	P.C.
MACKINTOSH, Gord	St. Johns	N.D.P.
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	N.D.P.
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	N.D.P.
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	P.C.
McCRAE, James, Hon.	Brandon West	P.C.
McGIFFORD, Diane	Osborne	N.D.P.
McINTOSH, Linda, Hon.	Assiniboia	P.C.
MIHYCHUK, MaryAnn	St. James	N.D.P.
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	P.C.
NEWMAN, David	Riel	P.C.
PALLISTER, Brian, Hon.	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	P.C.
PITURA, Frank	Morris	P.C.
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	P.C.
RADCLIFFE, Mike	River Heights	P.C.
REID, Daryl	Transcona	N.D.P.
REIMER, Jack, Hon.	Niakwa	P.C.
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	P.C.
ROBINSON, Eric	Rupertsland	N.D.P.
ROCAN, Denis	Gladstone	P.C.
SALE, Tim	Crescentwood	N.D.P.
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	N.D.P.
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	P.C.
STRUTHERS, Stan	Dauphin	N.D.P.
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	P.C.
TOEWS, Vic, Hon.	Rossmere	P.C.
TWEED, Mervin	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
VODREY, Rosemary, Hon.	Fort Garry	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	N.D.P.

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA  
THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS**

Tuesday, October 31, 1995

**TIME – 7 p.m.**

**LOCATION – Winnipeg, Manitoba**

**CHAIRPERSON – Mr. Mervin Tweed (Turtle Mountain)**

**ATTENDANCE - 11 – QUORUM - 6**

*Members of the Committee present:*

Hon. Mr. Reimer

Ms. Barrett, Ms. Cerilli, Mr. Dyck, Ms. Friesen, Mr. McAlpine, Ms. McGifford, Messrs. Penner, Radcliffe, Sveinson, Tweed

**APPEARING:**

Mr. Gary Kowalski, MLA for The Maples

**MATTERS UNDER DISCUSSION:**

Bill 18, The Housing and Renewal Corporation Amendment Act

\* \* \*

**Mr. Chairperson:** Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Will the Standing Committee on Municipal Affairs please come to order.

This evening the committee will be resuming consideration of Bill 18, The Housing and Renewal Corporation Amendment Act. To date we have not had any persons registered to speak to this bill and, at this point, I will canvass the audience to see if there are any persons in attendance who wish to speak to the bill. Seeing none, is it the will of the committee to proceed with clause-by-clause consideration of the bill? [agreed]

On Bill 18, The Housing and Renewal Corporation Amendment Act, does the minister responsible have a brief opening statement?

**Hon. Jack Reimer (Minister of Housing):** No.

**Mr. Chairperson:** We thank the minister. Does the critic from the official opposition party have an opening statement?

**Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson):** I will have a brief opening statement, but I do have a number of questions that I want to ask the minister with regard to this bill.

I guess I just want to begin by stating that this bill is a very short bill, and it seems like it is an innocuous bill, but the effects of this, I think, could be quite far reaching in terms of the management and governance of public housing in the province of Manitoba. That is why I am pleased to see that we are going to have the time tonight to give it due consideration.

I also want to inform the committee that I do have a number of amendments that I am going to be proposing. We have serious concerns on our side of the House about the future of public housing in Manitoba.

When we look at the record of this government in terms of the way that they have centralized the management and governance of public housing, we are concerned about how this piece of legislation is going to fit into that and concerned about what it is going to do to the public management of social housing in the province.

I know that there have been large reductions in funding from the federal government for social housing and that there is a problem in terms of maintenance and upkeep of public housing and there is a problem with the public housing in Manitoba with instability in certain communities, with vacancies in certain communities, and I think we need to be looking at ways that we can solve those problems that are going to involve the community.

I know that the minister has made a number of comments that are also in support of that, but my concern is that what we see actually happening in the

department is not in keeping with supporting that kind of community involvement and tenant involvement in public housing.

I am very concerned that we have had large reductions in the staffing that work for the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation. There has been, as I understand it, a reduction since 1988 from about 120 staff to about 90 staff who are working for the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation. We can see that, with federal reduction in funding, there are no new projects that are being done or brought on board in terms of new housing creation. We have to, I think, look at what is going to be the future role of the corporation.

I guess I just want to conclude my remarks by saying that those are some of the areas that I want to ask questions on tonight. There has not been an opportunity to deal with this legislation in that respect because of the rules in the House that prevent us from asking questions about legislation once it is introduced. There has not been another opportunity for us to really deal with the legislation and the purpose of the legislation, so that is the area that I want to have addressed tonight, or the opportunity I want to have tonight.

With that, I conclude my remarks.

**Mr. Chairperson:** I thank the member for Radisson. The bill will be considered clause by clause. During the consideration of a bill, the title and the preamble are postponed until all other clauses have been considered in their proper order by the committee.

Shall Clause 1 pass?

**Ms. Cerilli:** I have a number of general questions, as I said, that I want to ask the minister. I think that even before we look at the clause by clause I would like to ask some of those very basic questions.

To begin with, I just wanted to ask the minister directly why we are having this bill presented to us at this time.

**Mr. Reimer:** I think that, as was pointed out when the bill was introduced to the House, it was for a couple of reasons. One of them was the fact that the board would be increased to have more public participation. It gives the opportunity to appoint more people from the general population, if you want to call it, to be part of the decision making. It will go from five members up to 13 members, so that gives the opportunity to appoint more people from the public sector. Right now the board is comprised of five senior civil servants with no public participation on that board.

What it also will do, it will be in line with some of the recommendations from the Auditor who is reviewing the books of the Manitoba Housing and Renewal, the MHRC. I will just quote from the report from the Auditor where she replies, quote: We are also concerned with the reporting relationships which result from the existence of two separate boards of directors, one for MHRC and one for the Manitoba Housing Authority. It would appear that with two boards there is not always clarity as to responsibility and authority. We recommend that you review the existing governance structure.

With that in mind, we are trying to not only comply with what the Auditor is recommending, but as pointed out, we are trying to get a better direction and more cohesiveness for decision making as to the direction that the Manitoba Housing Authority and MHRC would go. Those are mainly the reasons for the introduction of the bill.

**Ms. Cerilli:** The minister has just answered my second question. It is Halloween. He may be psychic.

If the intent of this bill is to set up a new framework so that there will be amalgamation between the Manitoba Housing Authority and the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation, will then the members of the Manitoba Housing Authority be the individuals who will be appointed to the Housing and Renewal Corporation board?

**Mr. Reimer:** The member will also remember that during the introduction of the bill there was an illusion that this gives the vehicle for an amalgamation, if amalgamation is so desired, towards the efficiencies of

taking these things into consideration. So this bill will give us that type of a direction if so desired. As mentioned, what we are doing is opening the board membership to non civil servant members and the possibility of a consolidation with the Manitoba Housing and the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation if it is deemed to be appropriate, yes.

**Ms. Cerilli:** In discussions with the Auditor, is this specifically what the Auditor recommended, that the two boards be amalgamated?

**Mr. Reimer:** There was no direct so-called face-to-face contact with the Auditor in her report. The Auditor made this recommendation in part of her general summation of the government at large and in particular to our department, or the Department of Housing. This was one of the recommendations that she came about with, but it did not come about because of face-to-face conversations or interaction between my department and hers.

**Ms. Cerilli:** So the Auditor emphasized that there were problems with respect to the accounting in terms of authority and accountability between the Housing and Renewal Corporation and the Housing Authority and it was the department that came up with the idea of amalgamating the two boards as a way of dealing with that.

**Mr. Reimer:** I do not think that the Auditor directed the directive because there was trouble that she saw. She saw that it would help and it would simplify for clarity and the responsibility and authority, but she did not say that there was trouble within the authority or the accounting system. It was just a matter of looking to try to bring about a better clarity and responsibility within the two.

\* (1910)

**Ms. Cerilli:** The point that I was asking about, though, had to do with the idea, to set up for this type of structure was not a recommendation from the Auditor. It was a creation of who?

**Mr. Reimer:** Well, naturally the creation of the bill comes from the department. The recommendations that

we are working on and taking into consideration were because of the Auditor's recommendations. The recommendations from the Auditor led into some of the analysis and the directions and the formation of this bill, yes.

**Ms. Cerilli:** So just to clarify then the question I had asked earlier, is it the intent of you and the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation to have the new positions be made of the members from the current Manitoba Housing Authority?

**Mr. Reimer:** What this will do is, it will give the availability of using this as a resource to the MHA Board, as was pointed out. There are 12 members on that board right now. Whether they will all want to be reappointed or whether they will be part of the reappointment process is something that will come about as time will progress in evaluating this. But the 12 people who are on that board right now are capable and well-serving people. As to whether they will serve and continue to serve is really a decision made at that time.

**Ms. Cerilli:** But the current members of the Manitoba Housing Authority Board will be the first ones considered for appointment onto the new positions for the Manitoba Housing Renewal and Corporation.

**Mr. Reimer:** Yes, they would be considered.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Are any of the members on the Manitoba Housing Authority Board currently tenants in social housing?

**Mr. Reimer:** No.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Is there any consideration or commitment from the government to ensure that there are tenants from public housing developments in the province to be members of this new board?

**Mr. Reimer:** The suggestion that is put forth is worthy of consideration. There has been no consideration made in that way, but I would think that the quality of the board is always a primary function that the department looks at, and the availability of people to serve is always of note. If there was equality—and the

commitment that comes through from all sectors of society or from the general public is worthy of consideration.

I would not feel that there had to be a certain proportioning of a certain classification of person or direction or area or gender for that matter. It is the quality of the person that would be looked at. Then, if this person or persons are from within the public housing sector, their qualifications and their considerations should be just as valuable as anybody.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Are there certain qualifications that the minister could table for us that are required of the current board members for the Housing Authority, and could we have an explanation of what the qualities, as the minister has said, are required for membership on these boards?

**Mr. Reimer:** I think the quality and content of all boards are of something that comes about through the creation of the individuals getting involved and their desire to participate in something that they feel is worthy of making better in a sense. Whether it is the Housing Renewal board or Highway Traffic Safety board or anything like that, it is usually the people who have an interest in that area that would be the people that you would try to want to be involved with and awareness so that, when decisions have to be made, there is a depth of quality and a depth of knowledge that you could rely on to try to help and give direction to the department through the consultation process.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I have a list in front of me of the current board members on the current Manitoba Housing Authority Board, and I am wondering if the minister could explain what the qualities are, the depth of experience and the contribution that are required of these people.

**Mr. Reimer:** The composition of the existing board has been pointed out to me, are from various backgrounds, various professions, various regions of Manitoba. Their backgrounds are various as to their specific expertise, if you want to call it. I do not have that information in front of me right at the moment, but I do know that there is an accountant on the board; there is a lawyer on the board; there is a lady that has a

strong background in housing in Manitoba; there is a small business owner. So the variety is quite—there is a real estate person on here somewhere, Dick Hildebrand. I am sure that I could find out exactly the criteria of each one of them, but I just do not have that information right at my fingertips tonight.

**Ms. Diane McGifford (Osborne):** Mr. Chairperson, I wanted to ask a question about boards too. I am disturbed to see that there are no tenants on the board. It seems to be the trend among boards on which I have served that the users of the service, the stakeholders are those who are best equipped—or perhaps I should amend that to say well equipped—to serve the boards since they can identify the needs of the community. I would like to ask the same question as the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) asked or, I suppose, make a suggestion. Are you intending to have tenants on the board?

**Mr. Reimer:** Mr. Chairperson, as was previously noted, we do not really put out strong criteria for selection in the sense of certain areas that there has to be a participant in. We try to give it a broader section of participation. The suggestion that was made by the member for Radisson, that some of these areas should be looked at, is a very valid suggestion, and that is, maybe there is representation closer aligned with the housing tenants associations and things like that. The quality of people that could or should be approached on that is something that possibly should be looked at.

**Ms. McGifford:** Mr. Chairperson, so the minister then would consider reserving two or three places, shall we say, on the board for tenants?

\* (1920)

**Mr. Reimer:** I do not think that the minister said that. No, I think what I would look at, and what we would be willing to look at, is all names or peoples that are brought forth for consideration in an open mind and an open consideration as to whether the vacancies and the contributions that he or she can bring to the board is of prime consideration, but to specifically earmark certain numbers or amounts as to a selection process would not be part of the consideration.

**Ms. McGifford:** Can the minister tell me if there are more female-headed families, male-headed families, or I guess what I am really looking for, are there more women in public housing than men?

**Mr. Reimer:** The amount of variables that can be brought into play into the analysis of population breakdown within the Manitoba Housing sector is quite complicated. The age, the family unit, the location, those are all variables that have to be taken into consideration. I do not believe that—in fact the department does not keep a statistic as to gender of the tenants in the units, so it is hard for me to say whether there is a predominance of males or females within the structure.

The member has made a point that the single-family unit is mainly headed by the female and there is possibly a noticeable difference in numbers that way, but in general I could not give an exact count.

**Ms. McGifford:** My concern is that single-parent families headed by women be represented on the board.

**An Honourable Member:** Good looking, too.

**Mr. Reimer:** It has just been pointed out to me that five of the 12 members on the board are female, so there is a fair representation on the board right now.

**Ms. McGifford:** Unlike the member for Emerson (Mr. Penner), I do not care if they are good looking or not as long as these women are tenants.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Shall Clause 1 pass?

**Ms. Cerilli:** I want to get back to some of the questions that I was asking, also related to what the member for Osborne was asking, still with the membership of this Housing Authority Board, and I am wondering how many of them are private property owners, private property managers, if there are any, as the minister has suggested, in real estate, if they are currently active agents.

**Mr. Reimer:** I have to admit to the member for Radisson that I am not totally familiar with the occupations of all the members on the board. For me

to speculate as to who would be involved with what other than the odd one that I know for sure, I would only be speculating as to their occupation. The only one whom I know for sure who is an accountant is the vice-chair, Mr. Ted Chiswell. His background is accountancy. I know that for sure. The other ones I would not want to put on the record.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Would the minister undertake to provide me with that information?

**Mr. Reimer:** Yes.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I am wondering if the minister can tell me what the position is of the tenant community relations subcommittee of the Manitoba Housing Authority Board with respect to Bill 18. Were they consulted? Did they have any input?

**Mr. Reimer:** No, at the time of drafting of this bill they were not consulted.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Who is on that subcommittee of the Manitoba Housing Authority?

**Mr. Reimer:** Here again, without putting people on the committee that I am not totally sure of, it might be better for me to get that list for the member. I know of at least two on there but the other two we are not exactly sure of, so it would be better for me to get that list for the member, if that is agreeable.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Are there tenants from public housing on that subcommittee of the board?

**Mr. Reimer:** No, because it is a subcommittee of the board members only.

**Ms. Cerilli:** So it is only members of the existing Manitoba Housing Authority Board who are on the tenant community relations committee.

**Mr. Reimer:** Yes, it is, and this is the committee that travels throughout various parts of Manitoba listening to the various presenters and problems that are in the community. They form a very vital part of communication not only to the board but through the board to the minister.

**Ms. Cerilli:** So further then to the questions I have been asking in the House this week, how many meetings has this committee had?

**Mr. Reimer:** This committee meets monthly, and what they have done over the past is they have tried to rotate it out into the rural area, and approximately between a half and a third of their meetings are outside of the city of Winnipeg, for involvement with the rural market.

**Ms. Cerilli:** If this committee is meeting monthly, why were they not consulted on a bill that is going to change the structure of the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation and the Manitoba Housing Authority, particularly when, as the minister has just said, the purpose of the bill was to include community representation on the board? Why were they not consulted?

**Mr. Reimer:** Well, the member must take into recall that the reporting is to the board after the meetings, and it becomes part of the minutes that are then presented to the board for review, which does come to the minister for perusal. So their contribution is part of the minutes which then becomes part of the review by the department.

I was just getting an update as to some of the meetings and some of the procedures, so it was more or less in line with what I was mentioning, other than the fact that the setup of the new board is to have more public participation involved with the decision making, so it would be even more conducive to having the department made aware of the decisions through more public consultation with the members on the board.

So I would think that it would be even more open for input once the new board would be established with these people from the community.

\* (1930)

**Ms. Cerilli:** My understanding, is the minister correct when he is saying the Tenant and Community Relations committee will have more input once Bill 18 is in place and we have the new board, the amalgamated board, between the Housing Renewal

Corporation and the Housing Authority?

**Mr. Reimer:** The subcommittee of this would still be a very valuable force and contributor to the board, and I can see no reason why their opinions and why their input would not be as valued or even more valued in making decisions.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Have the Manitoba Housing Authority board members been encouraging? Are they supportive of Bill 18? Have they been promoting this kind of amalgamation?

**Mr. Reimer:** I believe that the efficiencies that all departments are looking at and all boards are looking at is to try to make decision making easier, try to make the lines of communication more open and more conducive to the realities of today's society and the parameters of decision making and the priorities that come about because of the economic situation that everybody faces, so that anything that is more of a conducive nature to make decisions easier or to make decisions faster is usually something that is of acceptance by the people who are going to be involved with it.

It is something that has not created any type of fervour with the board members as to why or what is happening. They look forward to the fact that there will be a streamlining, in effect, of decision making and making things happen a little easier.

**Ms. Cerilli:** My specific question was related specifically to the Manitoba Housing Authority board and their view of the direction that the government is going. Is it something that they have been encouraging, supporting? What is their position with respect to this bill, and what is their rationale for that?

**Mr. Reimer:** Well, I guess the Manitoba Housing Authority Board, which I sit on, is of the opinion that anything that would make it easier for decision making and make it easier for input for the public at large to be part of the decision making is not only good for the department, but it has more of a conscience and an awareness of what is happening in the housing area which comes under their jurisdiction. There has been no disagreement with this direction.



**Mr. Chairperson:** Order, please.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I just want to clarify a question that was asked by the member for Emerson (Mr. Penner) with respect to my questions, and that was part of the information I gave in my preamble or my opening statement to the bill, was that because the legislation was introduced during Estimates, I was not able to ask a number of questions.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Gerry McAlpine (Sturgeon Creek):** On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, we are here to discuss the bill, not to get into discussions with other members across the way. The remarks are supposed to go through the Chair, and questions of the minister, not of the comments of the member for Emerson (Mr. Penner).

**Mr. Chairperson:** We do not have a point of order, but I would ask Ms. Cerilli to direct her questions directly to the minister through me, and on the bill, please.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson):** On a new point of order, it appears to me that the line of questioning and discussion is simply not pertinent to the actual make-up and the drafting of the bill. It calls into the question the whole operation of the Housing Authority and the relevance of the Housing Authority, and therefore I would suggest to you, Mr. Chairman, that you direct the committee to the questioning on the pertinent aspects of the bill.

**Ms. Cerilli:** On the same point of order. I would ask that if you listened to the questions I am asking, you will see that the bill is about the composition of the new board, and what I am asking about is this current composition of the two boards that currently exist that are going to be amalgamated, given Bill 18.

So I think that my questions are perfectly in order.

**Mr. Chairperson:** To the point of order, the member does not have a point of order. The minister did refer to the compositions of the committees in the House.

I will ask you to continue, please.

\* \* \*

**Ms. Cerilli:** I want to refer then to the objectives of each of the boards, the national Housing Authority as well as the Manitoba Housing Renewal Corporation.

The objective of the Manitoba Housing Authority, as far as I am informed, is to seek and maintain and improve the quality of existing aging housing stock and to provide an effective housing service to Manitobans of low and moderate income and to those with specialized needs.

Then we have the Manitoba Housing Renewal Corporation, which is there to ensure there is an adequate supply of housing stock in Manitoba, to enhance the affordability and accessibility to adequate housing for Manitobans, particularly those of low and moderate income or those with specialized needs, to maintain and improve the condition of existing housing stock, and to stimulate and influence the activities of the housing market to benefit Manitobans as a whole.

I want to ask the minister, given those two mandates, what has been the point of—I am trying to think of the words that have been used, where there have been difficulties, where there have been problems with respect to the relationship of these two boards as have been outlined by the Auditor.

**Mr. Reimer:** Mr. Chairman, it should be pointed out that the two entities that we are referring to are the MHRC, which is a corporation, and the MHA, which is the operating branch of the department. The MHRC is a Crown agency.

So what the Auditor is referring to is, because of the close proximity and the co-operation between the two, that there should be a better liaison, a more harmonious type of relationship. As mentioned before, it is not as if there was trouble or a glaring problem. It is just that the directions in trying to achieve the mandate, because they both work under the same mandate, that they will be reporting, as was pointed out, that there is a certain degree of ambiguity in the reporting relationships

because of the functions that the two are responsible for.

The Auditor feels that if there is more of a cohesiveness between the two trying to work under the same mandate as the member for Radisson has mentioned and trying to supply the adequate housing for the people of need or of disability that it would make more for the efficiencies of the whole, and this is more or less why the recommendation was made by the Auditor.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Well, as I understand it, the Housing Authority is there to manage the existing housing stock and the Manitoba Housing Renewal Corporation was there to finance the development of new housing. Is that the way that the minister would describe the roles of these two entities? What I am wanting to ask is—

**Mr. Reimer:** In general terms and in a broad spectrum, what the member is referring to is more or less true. The MHRC, as has been pointed out, does not have the availability of funding for new stock, which we have talked about quite in depth at times, and the concern that we as a government have as to what is happening with the federal withdrawal of funding on that particular aspect for social housing. So that is true. That is part of the slowdown on that sector of the organizational chart.

\* (1940)

On the other hand, as has been pointed out, MHA and their mandate to look after the stock is growing because of the fact that not only is there a continuous need for social housing, but there is also the recognition that because of the aging of stock and the continual need for upgrading and for M and I on the stock that is aging that that is another factor. These are the type of parameters that are brought into perspective when the Auditor was looking at the relationship between the two.

**Ms. Cerilli:** So when we have the new, amalgamated board, the new board—maybe I should back up a minute because the other thing I was going to add is, the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation also is the

owner, if you would, of the existing housing stock of public housing. Is that correct?

**Mr. Reimer:** Yes.

**Ms. Cerilli:** So when we have the new board, then the ownership of the housing stock and the maintenance and improvement function will be under the auspices of one board.

**Mr. Reimer:** If it is perceived with the amalgamation of the two boards, that is true.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Currently, the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation Board consists of senior civil servants in the Department of Housing. What is their position with respect to Bill 18?

**Mr. Reimer:** I should point out for clarification that of the five civil servants who are on the present MHRC board, three are from outside of the Department of Housing. So it is not all within the same department. And then there are myself and the deputy minister also, so there are seven total.

**Ms. Cerilli:** The question I asked from that was: What is the feeling of the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation board with respect to this new structure?

**Mr. Reimer:** I think it is generally perceived that any type of streamlining or making easy decision making is something that is looked upon as a positive change in a sense of the directives and the objectives that are set out within the authority and that it is not a topic of discussion, if you want to call it, when the board gets together. There is a recognition that there is new legislation coming about and the changing of it, but it is not seen as a great derogative or disparity among the board members as to why it is happening or what is going to happen.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I am concerned about what is happening with public housing in other provinces in Canada, particularly in Alberta and Ontario. I am wondering if this new structure would not allow for the privatization of the management of complexes of public housing in Manitoba.

**Mr. Reimer:** I think that, as the member for Radisson has pointed out, there are a fair amount of changes and redirections of attitudes throughout Canada in various provinces as to how they are approaching public housing. The direction in regard to this bill really has no mandate to initiate or to direct any type of avenues that we have not discussed before. This speculation as to what can happen or what is down the road is beyond, really, discussion as to what is possible or not possible. I guess it is interpretation and speculation, really, that dictates what happens.

**Ms. Cerilli:** We have just established the fact that we are now bringing together the ownership and the management functions in terms of public housing. Would the minister not agree that now, unlike before, the ownership of Manitoba Housing will be influenced by pressure to deal with management of the current public housing? Would the minister not agree that before, if the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation did not want to go forward with any privatization of public housing, they could prevent that because they owned it. Now the new board which is going to be joined together with the management function, that will no longer be the case. If the majority of the board members want to go forward with privatization of management of public housing, that would now be possible?

**Mr. Reimer:** I guess what should be pointed out is that, under the terms of reference under the MHRC and the supplying of public housing in Manitoba, the rights and the obligations are directed by the act itself. Just for the sake of reading into the record, all properties, rights and obligations acquired or incurred by or vested in the corporation under this act, or any agreement entered into under this act, whether it is in a name or in the name of Her Majesty in the right of Manitoba, are properties, rights or obligations acquired or undertaken by and on behalf of Her Majesty in the right of Manitoba, in a sense saying that the government is still responsible.

The fact that the decision making still is presented by the minister or by the direction that is taken, there should not be this type of perception that it is some sort of new direction that has been taken just because there is an amalgamation or the ability to amalgamate and the

fact that we are making the board more open in a sense. The powers of the board do not change really.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Can the minister tell me if there have been discussions at the Manitoba Housing Authority Board level or suggestions by members of the Manitoba Housing Authority Board recommending, or with respect to, privatization of the management of public housing in Manitoba?

\* (1950)

**Mr. Reimer:** I have not been part of any conversations of that nature.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Is the minister aware of any of those conversations?

**Mr. Reimer:** It is speculative as to whether there are conversations of that between any type of people or in a department. I have no privy to what other board members talk about or other departments are talking. It would be highly speculative on my part to say whether they were talking that way.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Is the minister opposed or open to the privatization of any part of public housing in Manitoba?

**Mr. Reimer:** I think the member is asking for an opinion. I believe that is really irrelevant to—

**Ms. Cerilli:** I would ask for the minister to state the government's policy then with respect to the privatization of any form of the management or the stock of public housing in Manitoba.

**Mr. Reimer:** Just checking with staff, there has been no movement or no discussions or no activities regarding this direction that the member for Radisson is indicating. I cannot give her any type of further comment on that.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Penner:** On a point of order, I would again ask the Chairman to pay very close attention to the questions. I think most of the questions that you have

heard in the last 15 minutes are irrelevant to the bill. I would suggest that you direct the members' questioning to the pertinence of the bill and the contents of the bill.

**Ms. Cerilli:** My questions are relevant to the bill, and I will ask one further question in this vein I think that will show the relevance.

**Mr. Chairperson:** The question on the point of order, in regard to discussion and questions on privatization, is indeed out of order.

\* \* \*

**Ms. Cerilli:** Mr. Chairperson, through you to the minister, I think that this bill opens the door for the ability to privatize, particularly the management of public housing. That has been suggested to me by many members of the public that I have talked to about the bill, and I think that it is completely not only relevant, but it is my responsibility as a member to ask these types of questions of the minister.

**Mr. Reimer:** I would just like to mention or point out that the bill itself is really in dealing with the membership of the board and the designation of a chairman and a chairperson on the board. The powers of the existing board and the powers that this board have still fall within the general and wider parameters of the act itself so there is really no difference in evaluation, devaluation or evolution of powers that are going to come about because of the make-up of the new board. They still fall within the parameters of the existing board.

We are talking about an amendment to an existing board so that the powers are not being put, as the member says, towards a privatization motion or anything like that. I believe it is just speculative on the member's part as to what is happening.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I would feel comfortable then if the minister would affirm his and his government's commitment to, even with this new structure for Manitoba Housing, as the role outlines the existing Housing Authority and the existing Renewal Corporation, that this will remain public housing.

**Mr. Reimer:** I would like to read into the record then as to what the purposes and the objectives of The Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation Act is, which will be a complement to what we are talking about. Part of the purposes and the objectives—and it is right in the preamble, if you want to call it, and I will read it into the record.

The purposes and the objectives of this act are to: (a) to ensure that there is an adequate supply of housing stock in Manitoba; (b) to enhance the affordability of, and accessibility to, adequate housing for Manitobans, particularly those of low and moderate income or those with specialized needs; (c) to maintain and improve the condition of existing housing stock; and (d) to stimulate and influence the activities of the housing market to the benefit of Manitobans as a whole.

So the preamble, if you want to call it, for this bill is going to be part of an amendment so really the direction will not change with the introduction of this amendment to this bill.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Then, in answering my question, would the government make a commitment to retain all of the housing stock currently owned and managed by the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation and the Manitoba Housing Authority as a public entity?

**Mr. Reimer:** The member is asking me to make a commitment on housing that changes and fluctuates on a daily, monthly and a yearly basis as to its content and its condition. It is hypothetical in a sense, but, at the same time, it would be very hard for this minister to guarantee the quality and the condition of housing stock of today's nature into what might come about one or two or three months down the road or six months down the road when certain situations arise. So to guarantee numbers would be inappropriate at this time.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I want to just ask for the minister to affirm the government's commitment to public housing. As I said, a number of people think that this bill sets up a structure that opens the door for privatization, and I just want some assurances that that is not the intent or direction that this government is headed with this bill.

**Mr. Reimer:** I believe the member for Radisson is very, very sincere in her commitment to public housing. I have kept her abreast as to almost all the developments that have happened within the last while regarding the housing here in Manitoba. I shared with her the disappointment and the optimism at the same time, or the optimism and then the disappointment, of meeting with the federal Minister of Housing so that a lot of the things that we discussed in Estimates and in various Question Periods as to what was happening with Manitoba Housing and the direction that was taken because of the lack of participation with the federal government in the housing is of a big concern.

I can assure the member that this is of great importance to Manitobans, to this government, to this department and this minister that there is a continual recognition of the fact of social housing and the need for social housing within certain parameters and of need of Manitobans as pointed out through the act and the preamble on the needs for recognition. There will always be, I believe, some sort of a requirement for the recognition of people in need and the people who have to be of a nature of government involvement. Manitoba Housing will have a role to play in that supply.

\* (2000)

I believe the commitment has been there historically over the years, the commitment not only for housing here in Manitoba but the recent commitment for enhanced housing funding for the northern and native sector of housing, where we increased the budget through cost-sharing with the federal government for an additional, I believe it is, \$4.2 million, which is going to result in modernization and upgrade to around 340 communities in Manitoba. It is going to mean the opening up of another 160 units that were closed for modernization.

These are the types of commitments that this government has had and will continue to have to enhance the housing market for all sectors of Manitoba. I believe the record is clear as to our commitment, and I can give assurance to the member that I will continue to keep this as a high priority as to the recognition of

housing needs and the role that the Manitoba government plays in supplying these.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I thank the minister for that answer.

I want to move on now to another area that is related to the question I was asking at the beginning in terms of tenant involvement on the new board governing social housing. I have had some assurances from the minister that there will be consideration to ensure that there are tenants from public housing developments on that board. I appreciate that. I hope that is going to be sincere consideration.

Now, I would ask if the minister has considered that some of these positions could be elected from tenants. There are tenant associations active to varying degrees in Manitoba. There have been a number of community housing groups in Manitoba, and I am wondering if the minister would consider that some of the positions, to have real community participation and representation, could be elected from the community, from the public housing developments that are operating in Manitoba.

**Mr. Reimer:** I would hope that in the selection process that comes about regarding the people for the positions on the board that there is a willingness for various people to come forth with names for consideration for the board.

As to how the individuals would come forth, I do not want to presuppose or to predirect anybody as to what I feel or what is felt should be the proper way to solicit names. I know that some of the housing authorities are very active. A good example is Gilbert Park and their people involved with that. They have been very active. They have met with me. They have expressed their concerns as to what they feel, how they would like their complex run, and I have to give a lot of credit to the participants in that complex for their taking charge, if you want to call it, of their own area.

They want to even take more control of their situation there at Gilbert Park, and I encourage that. I think that is a very healthy and a very productive way of participating and being part of the decision making and part of the evaluation as to what they feel is best.

So it is that type of involvement that you look for when you start looking at board positions, people who have a genuine concern and a genuine feeling of wanting to do something better for not only themselves but for their community. Those are the types of value assets that you try to look for when you are filling board positions.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I just want to clarify, first of all, the minister referred to Gilbert Park housing authority, and I just want to correct the language, because it was this government that eliminated local housing authorities.

That is a tenant association, and there is a vast difference. One of the things I have been recommending in the House is that the government would proceed with the 1991 plan to develop social housing advisory groups, which would be a collection of community members and representatives from tenant associations that could feed into the Housing Authority, this new board that is being created.

I am wondering if the minister has considered that kind of structure when they brought in this bill that is going to change the management structure and the board structure for the Housing Authority and the Renewal Corporation, if they have considered a program that would develop the structure to feed into that so that there is true community participation and representation from tenants in social housing as well as the staff, the tenant relations officers, the custodial management people so that there can actually be a system where there is input and communication.

Has the minister considered that?

**Mr. Reimer:** The member for Radisson is right. I was using the wrong terminology. It is the tenant association that I should have been referring to at Gilbert Park and not the housing authority.

The member has made a very interesting observation and recommendation, and I can refer her back to an article I remember reading, and this was very similar to the time that there was a fair amount of concern about Lord Selkirk Park, and at that time, there was an article written by a local planner or someone. I cannot remember the name in fact, but he was talking

about the needs assessment and the asset-based assessment within various communities to try to come together for the betterment of the community and the community endeavours. It was an excellent article in which it pointed out that there needs to be more of an asset-based assessment of the strengths within the communities.

One of the strongest strengths of any type of community is the tenants association and the formation of a tenants association so that you get the grassroots participation, you get the people that are closest to the problem involved, not only for the problem solving but the problem direction as to what should or should not happen. It is an excellent suggestion. It is a good way to try to build a sense of community and the community taking charge and taking hold of their problems and to work towards a solution on it. I would encourage that, and I feel that is a very, very positive step in trying to eliminate a lot of the social problems that we have in certain areas. I welcome the suggestion.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I am pleased to hear the minister say that, and I am encouraged. I am wondering if he would then not think that it is part of the responsibility of the Department of Housing and the Manitoba Housing Authority, in conjunction with the Renewal Corporation, then to create the structure, the programs, that are going to support that kind of community development, support the development of tenant associations.

These people require training so that they can be able to effectively run meetings, so that they can deal with budgeting, so that they can organize community events. Would the minister support that kind of endeavour through the Manitoba Housing Authority, the department and the corporation in this new board structure? They would govern to support the development, again, through the staff that work as the tenant relations officers, the staff that supervise the management so that they are indeed going to support that kind of tenant involvement that the minister has spoken so highly of. Government can do a lot to provide the organizational, the funding support, which is there to some extent with the \$24-per-unit allowance that is provided, but I think that the government can do

more to really have a plan that is going to ensure that tenant associations are developed.

\* (2010)

I think that this kind of community development will go a long way, as I have said before, to help the community be involved in solving the problems, the social problems, I think, that are often apparent in public housing, and, as I have said before, that contribute to the high vacancy rate. There are a number of social problems that are contributing to high vacancy rates in certain areas of the city. Lord Selkirk Park is often referenced. I appreciate the information the minister sent to me the other day that shows that there are 14 housing complexes in the city of Winnipeg that have a vacancy rate of more than 10 percent. We can go a long way in dealing with the instability in some of these neighbourhoods if we are going to empower the tenants and give them the support that they need in order to work together to solve these problems. I am wondering if the minister would consider that that kind of support and structure should be part of this new board that is being created in the area of the Department of Housing.

**Mr. Reimer:** Mr. Chairperson, there is a lot of what the member for Radisson has said I totally agree with, in the direction that she is taking in her attitude towards, you know, where the best results can be attained through the use of housing and the whole area of social housing. It has become more and more of a concern and an overlapping of jurisdictions in the sense of social housing and family services and health, to another degree, the seniors, also through my department, and even with my other department, through Urban Affairs, where there is an overlapping of directions. The more that you can bring things down to a localized level within the community and community participation and community input, the better it is for the solving of social problems and the directions and the positiveness that you want to grow out of the community.

The suggestion of having them part of the consultation program is something that I would entertain quite seriously because I know I have made a point of going out to Lord Selkirk Park. I believe I

even went out—the first time was at the invitation of the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli), and we toured the site. I have been back there again having a community meeting with the I believe it is called Turtle Island [interjection] No, not Turtle Mountain, Turtle Island at their community centre and talking about trying to build a sense of community and a sense of participation within their group there.

I guess with anything you have to be optimistic that hopefully you can get some sort of movement and you get people involved, because those are the people who have to take charge and take responsibility in the sense of wanting to be captains of their own ship in a sense. We as government can supply the tenant relations officer as mentioned. We can also supply money on a per-unit basis, but unless we get the people involved and we encourage the participation, nothing will happen, and it just begins another program that does not proceed. But the fact of getting more participation on a public basis is something that always is of value to the government.

**Ms. Cerilli:** So the minister would agree then that there is a role for the tenant relations officer in supporting and working to develop the skills and the organization of the tenant groups.

**Mr. Reimer:** Anybody who has contact with any of the tenants or the tenant associations or works with them who can be utilized for a resource towards decision making has to be recognized and looked to for some sort of contribution when decisions are made. So they would all perform a part of it when there are evaluations made.

As pointed out, keeping it in mind that the tenants themselves are the primary benefactors and the primary goal, if you want to call it, of satisfaction of trying to keep their needs in mind. It is the tenants that we deal with. It is the tenants that become the priorities of decision making. Everything else is sort of a feeding towards that decision, towards the tenants and the well-being of the tenants. It is complementary.

**Ms. Cerilli:** So the minister is in agreement then that there is a role for the tenant relations staff who currently work with tenants in working to develop the

tenants association and that that is an important job that they can fill, that they can play a role as a community development person, in a sense, and they can help to ensure that the tenants are going to have the support that they need in order to organize themselves and develop the skills so that they are going to be able to have input into how their own housing is operated, so that they are going to be able to work together to solve some of the issues that they face, whether it is community safety, whether it is daycare needs, whether it is ensuring that there are programs for their children in the summer and after school, all of these kinds of projects that can be initiated by tenants associations that really benefit these neighbourhoods. Does the minister then see that it is a role of the staff in his department to help support that?

**Mr. Reimer:** I believe we have always been of the opinion that any type of encouragement towards a tenants association is a positive aspect and a positive development for an understanding of any type of projects. So, yes, I am totally in agreement with the member for Radisson in saying that they form a very, very valuable part of any type of complex.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Would the minister also agree that one of the things that tenants associations could do is have regular meetings with the maintenance and caretaking staff to look at what kind of needs there are in terms of maintenance improvements in the housing developments?

**Mr. Reimer:** Those are very valuable parts of any type of tenant association. I would encourage that they do become part of meeting on a regular basis with not only the building maintenance but the people who are involved with their complex so that there is a better understanding as to where problems are. A lot of problems can be seen in a different venue by people who are right onsite and people who are closer to the problems than people who just come in on an irregular basis.

I referred earlier to Gilbert Park. I know they do that on a regular basis with their maintenance people, and it has turned out to be very beneficial because they can look at priorities and they have indicated where there are even savings where certain things were

brought to the attention so there is an awareness of not only safety but savings and involvement within their own complex.

\* (2020)

### Point of Order

**Mr. Penner:** Most of us on this committee have been very patient in allowing the line of questioning that has been going on here. We are dealing simply, strictly with the operational aspects of the tenants associations and the operations of the various associations and how they function within the Housing Authority. There is absolutely nothing that is relevant to the bill as it is structured in that formation and the structure of the new board and therefore I would ask, Mr. Chairman, that you give serious consideration of curtailing these kinds of discussions. If that is not possible, then I would move an adjournment or consider, ask whether the Chairman and the minister might consider adjourning this committee until tomorrow morning to continue this debate and the questioning of the operation of the total authority.

**Ms. Cerilli:** On the point of order, I do not know if the member for Emerson has been listening, but the minister agreed when I said that we could be creating a structure here to ensure that the community participation he is interested in developing through having representatives from the Housing Authority and the Renewal Corporation join together could also be filtered down, if you would, to reach into the communities and the actual public housing developments that exist in the province.

I think this has been a very fruitful discussion. Perhaps the member for Emerson is not interested. I am not wanting to carry on too much longer, but I think this is an important opportunity. I am glad to see that the minister has been willing to engage in this dialogue and answer these questions. I think it has been very important.

**Mr. McAlpine:** Mr. Chairman, I, too, have been listening very carefully to the discussion between the minister and the member for Radisson. I would remind this committee, in terms of the purpose for us being



here, we are talking about the amendment in terms of changing simply the Housing and Renewal Corporation, the board, the structure of the board and the effect that is going to have on it.

For the last hour and 20 minutes we have been talking about everything else but. We have thrown in everything to deal with this. I can appreciate the member's interest in terms of dealing with a lot of information that maybe leads up to this and wanting general information, but I think that in the interests of the staff, the minister's staff and the time that this committee is putting into it, we are losing sight of the purpose for us being here as members of this committee. I would ask the Chair to rule on this and to bring some order to the structure of this committee.

**Mr. Chairperson:** It was a point of order and a suggestion, but it was strictly as a point of order, was it not?

What I would like to say is, as I listen to the questioning, I think that most are pertinent to the resolution, and the minister has willingly answered the other questions. As we are discussing moving through this bill, we are doing it clause by clause, and perhaps we can move from Clause 1 to Clause 2 and ask a question to start the process.

**Ms. Cerilli:** In response to that, I guess what I have been doing is just asking the general questions I have about the bill at the outset. I have really only one more question, and then I would be willing to go through with the clause by clause and the consideration of amendments that I have.

**Mr. Chairperson:** On that assumption, I will give you the next and last question.

\* \* \*

**Ms. Cerilli:** I would like to ask the minister why he thinks that the Gilbert Park tenant group has been so successful, and if he is not wanting to see that same kind of success throughout all the public housing developments in Manitoba.

**Mr. Reimer:** The Gilbert Park Tenants Association, I believe, is successful because the people decided that they wanted to take charge by themselves. They were led by a couple of strong people who had the ability to make decisions, to get involved. They put a lot of people in charge of various functions within the complex itself.

It is mainly the leadership that has come forth from two or three people in that area, and they have made it their quest to make Gilbert Park a better place for their families. They just got tired of the conditions that they were living in, and they decided to make a change on their own. This is mainly the reason that they did it.

It is encouraged to do it in other areas, other housing complexes. If there is leadership available, it should be fostered, it should be nurtured, it should be given the ability to get involved, to make decisions, to participate in decision making, to be part of some of the analysis of what the needs are within that complex. That is how you can build a stronger tenant association, and I believe very strongly that is the best way to bring a lot of the social problems out in a sense of self-analysis and self-criticism, so that these things get solved.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Well, the second part of my question was about ensuring that this would happen in other parts of the province, and I guess the involvement of Manitoba Housing in supporting the tenant group at Gilbert Park, I am wondering what that has been. We want to see a role on the part of the Housing Authority to cultivate the kind of leadership that has been shown there.

So the other part of my question was about the department ensuring that this is going to happen in other parts of the province and how that has been done at Gilbert Park and how that can be done in other parts of the province.

**Mr. Reimer:** The suggestion is a good suggestion, and I believe that what can be done is the more that it is talked about, not only by the people in the community but by the people who are involved with the Department of Housing and the people with the ability to make influential discussions, that is one way of spreading the news around. The success stories and the good news, if you want to call it, should be broadcast

more, so that this can act as a catalyst in other areas for the creation of tenant associations. It is a good point and should be maybe touted somehow through the department a bit more so that more people are aware of it.

**Mr. Chairperson:** As previously discussed, Clause 1—pass.

Clause 2(1).

**Ms. Cerilli:** I have an amendment for this section. I think the procedure is I move the amendment, read it, and then I speak to the amendment. Is that correct?

I move, seconded by the member for Osborne (Ms. McGifford),

THAT the proposed subsections 3(2) and 3(3), as set out in subsection 2(1) of the Bill, be struck out and the following substituted:

#### **Board members**

3(2) The Lieutenant Governor in Council may determine the number of members of the board, which may be an uneven number that is not less than nine and not more than 13.

#### **L.G. in C. appointments**

3(3) The Lieutenant Governor in Council may appoint four members of the board if the total number of members is nine, five members if the total number is 11, and six members if the total is 13.

#### **Tenants elected to the board**

3(4) The remaining members are to be tenants of housing projects or housing accommodation managed by a housing authority under this Act, elected to the board at an annual meeting held for that purpose in accordance with the regulations.

#### **Regulations**

3(4.1) The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations respecting the election of members under subsection (4), including, but not limited to,

(a) specifying the persons eligible to be elected and to vote;

(b) governing the manner in which and the time and place at which an election is to be held.

#### **Chairperson and vice-chairperson**

3(4.2) The board shall elect one of its members to be chairperson and another to be vice-chairperson.

I move that in both official languages.

#### **Motion presented.**

\* (2030)

**Mr. Chairperson:** Is there discussion on the amendment?

**Mr. Penner:** First of all, I would like to ask the minister, if this kind of an amendment were passed at this committee and adopted by government, how many tenant relations associations would you expect that we might have in this province?

**Mr. Reimer:** I have been informed it would be well over 100.

**Mr. Penner:** Is it possible that you might in fact have a tenant relations association in every community in rural Manitoba, from Piney to Halbstadt through Plum Coulee and Winkler-Morden?

**Mr. Reimer:** I guess anything is possible.

**Mr. Penner:** Then I would like the honourable member to explain how she would elect five people out of these huge, vast numbers of tenant relations associations to be elected to this board.

**Mr. Chairperson:** A qualification, yes.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Well, first of all, the purpose of introducing this amendment is to ensure that there is a democratization of the governance and then the management of public housing, and I think it is the same way that any election occurs. I think it would be great if there were hundreds of tenant associations throughout the province that would send members to elect representatives.

As we proceed through my amendments, I am also going to be recommending that the government follow through with the plan that they had in 1991 to set up social housing advisory groups, which would be another venue for input from tenants and from community into the provision of public and social housing, so I think that, as we have seen yesterday, there can be millions of people that can vote quite well. We can have democratic elections. There are a number of community boards that have elections that are also related to the Manitoba government, whether it is in the area of education, where the current government is introducing parent council advisories which are going to be elected from community members and parents with students in a school. We have Child and Family Services which has in the past elected community boards. This current government is looking at developing regional health boards. We would like to see those elected as well.

There is the Manitoba Sports Federation which has elected boards; the Manitoba Intercultural Council has had elected boards. Those are elected from member organizations or they could be from an annual general meeting where there could be an election. So I think that is not going to be a problem.

**Mr. Penner:** Mr. Chairman, this really concerns me because clause 3(4) of Ms. Cerilli's amendment to the bill indicates that: "**Tenants elected to the board** The remaining members are to be tenants of housing projects or housing accommodation managed by a housing authority under this Act, elected to the board at an annual meeting held for that purpose in accordance with the regulations."

Now I am wondering whether Ms. Cerilli is suggesting that there be an annual meeting held in this province once a year of all the housing authorities in a given place designated by this government for the sole purpose of electing five members to this board annually? How would she accommodate that under the auspices of this bill?

**Ms. Cerilli:** What I am recommending is that there would be an annual meeting for tenant groups to elect, and community members. There are lots of other community organizations that have an interest in

housing. What I am suggesting is that they would have an annual meeting, an annual conference, an annual convention, whatever you would like to call it, where they would elect representatives to the housing authority board and that that would be supported by the provincial government.

As all the other examples I have listed, that is done in a number of different areas that the Province of Manitoba has jurisdiction over. We have just heard a number of comments that are in support of having tenants involved in the actual governing board for the entire Manitoba Housing Authority. I am also recommending that those individuals would be democratically elected by the tenants that are their neighbours.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Is the committee ready for the question?

**Some Honourable Members:** Question.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Shall the amendment pass?

#### Voice Vote

**Mr. Chairperson:** All those in favour of the amendment, say yea.

**Some Honourable Members:** Yea.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Those opposed, say nay.

**Some Honourable Members:** Nay.

**Mr. Chairperson:** In my opinion, the Nays have it.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Recorded vote.

#### Formal Vote

*A COUNT-OUT VOTE was taken, the result being as follows: Yeas 4, Nays 6.*

**Mr. Chairperson:** The amendment is defeated. Six opposed; four in favour.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I never really got the chance to speak to the amendment other than—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Ms. Cerilli, I am sorry I have to stop you there. You cannot speak to the amendment after it has been defeated. I am sorry.

Shall Clause 2(1) pass?

**Mr. Gary Kowalski (The Maples):** I just wanted to put some comments from my experiences working both in the Lord Selkirk Development as a community police constable and also working with the public housing complex in my constituency of The Maples on Fife Street.

There is a need for a feeling of ownership amongst the tenants to feel that they have input into the decision made. It is hard to build a community with the transient nature of the population, but if there is a feeling that they have ownership, that they have involvement, not just advisory but in the final decision making, and if I was part of a caucus that had the ability to put amendments forward to this legislation at this point, I too would put an amendment similar to what was just defeated, to involve tenants in the decision making.

My question is to the minister. Will he consider any amendments or changing this legislation to involve tenants in the actual decision making on this board?

**Mr. Reimer:** The member for The Maples is very right in his observations regarding the contribution a tenants association has. He referenced two of the complexes that I have become more and more familiar with in their situations. I guess there is also the sense of community that has to be instilled, but it is also the sense of ownership within that complex. I believe that that comes about with participation, with involvement, with part of the decision making and the accountability of what they have brought upon themselves.

These are some of the things that would always be of great benefit to any type of development of any type of community, and the two that he refers to are—one of them particularly, Gilbert Park, is one that is showing that it can come to looking after itself; Selkirk Park, it

may need some more work on. It needs more community involvement and participation, but I guess it is like anything, you have to be an optimist and try to feel that possibly these things can come about.

\* (2040)

**Mr. Chairperson:** Clause 2.1—pass; Clause 2.2—pass.

We are now on discussion with Clause 3.

**Ms. Cerilli:** This is where I have another amendment.

I move, seconded by the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen),

THAT the following be added after section 3 of the Bill:

3.1 The following is added after subsection 23(6):

**Composition of provincial housing authority**  
23(6.1) When a housing authority is established for the entire province under subsection (2),

(a) the members of the board of the corporation appointed and elected under section 3 are to be the members of the housing authority; and

(b) subsections (3), (4) and (6) do not apply.

I would move that in both official languages and I would like to also speak to this amendment.

**Mr. Chairperson:** I have just been informed that there was a scope problem. The amendment is dealing not with the bill that is directly before us but with the original statute itself, and therefore the amendment should be amending something that is in the bill before us, not in the statute itself. [interjection] The amendment is out of order. The amendment is trying to correct the statute itself as opposed to the bill that is before us. If there is unanimous consent of the committee, the amendment can be considered. Is there consent?

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Then the amendment is out of order, respectfully.

We shall now go to Clause 3.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I have one third and final amendment, and I am hoping that this one will be in order.

I move, seconded by the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett),

THAT the following be added after section 3 of the Bill:

3.1 The following is added after subsection 23(7):

**Regional operation of provincial housing authority 23(7.1)** A housing authority that is established for the entire province shall

- (a) support tenant management of public housing by maintaining regional offices throughout the province;
- (b) in order to encourage community involvement in the operation of the housing authority, ensure that a social housing advisory group is elected in each region to advise the authority on local issues;
- (c) assist in developing tenant associations for public housing projects and provide financial and organizational support and training for those associations.

I move that in both official languages.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Again, there is a problem with the scope of the amendment. It is dealing not with the bill before us but with the original statute. Therefore, unless it is the will of the committee—is it the will of the committee?

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**Mr. Chairperson:** I therefore rule the amendment out of order and the committee has denied consent to consider it.

Shall Clause 3 pass?

**Ms. Cerilli:** I just want to ask the minister, especially given the discussion that we had prior to my introducing of the amendments, if he would not agree that the amendments that I have put forward are in keeping with what he has supported in terms of the development of tenant associations, the development of input of tenants into the management of public housing and generally into ensuring that there is tenant representation in decision making in public housing. Would he not support, if not specifically, that the amendments are applicable to this bill—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Excuse me. We cannot go back to the amendment in the discussion.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. McAlpine:** We have already dealt with that in terms of what the member for Radisson is speaking about, and I think we should be dealing with Section 3—[interjection] No, it has not passed. I would ask you to bring the member to order.

**Ms. Cerilli:** On the point of order then, I will simply ask my questions as they apply to Section 3 which talk about the department and the functions of the branch. If we get past this point of order, I think you will find my questions will be in order as they apply to particularly 6(3).

**Mr. Chairperson:** The point of order is indeed a point of order and the questions cannot pertain to the amendments as previously discussed. We can ask questions on Clause 3 to the minister. Please proceed.

\* \* \*

**Ms. Cerilli:** The provisions in the bill that talk about the employees in the Department of Housing and the different branches of the government that relate to housing are under the auspices of this new board. I would think that the minister would agree that the

suggestions that I have made today, this evening, are in keeping with the view that we both share in terms of tenant involvement—

### Point of Order

**Mr. Penner:** I caution you, Mr. Chairperson, that the honourable member is directing her question to the same amendment that she has already proposed before, and therefore I would ask you to rule her out of order and proceed with the movement of Clause 3 in the bill.

**Mr. Chairperson:** The member, I would agree, has a point of order. The questions cannot deal with the amendment or suggest to deal with the amendment. I would ask that the member please ask the questions regarding Clause 3.

\* \* \*

**Ms. Cerilli:** The sections that I am referring to are the two sections that are numbered 6(2) and 6(3) which talk about the functions and duties—

**An Honourable Member:** That is past No. 3.

**Ms. Cerilli:** That is in Section 3. They are part of Section 3; 6(2) and 6(3) which speak to the duties in the department. I am wanting to ask the minister if he does not agree, as I think he has. He has agreed with me when I have asked a number of questions with respect to tenant involvement, with respect to the role of the staff in the Department of Manitoba Housing, that work in the Manitoba Housing Authority, that they support tenant input into management, that they support the development of tenant associations. I guess I am just seeking agreement that it is in the best interests of social housing that we move forward in this vein.

\* (2050)

**Mr. Reimer:** I believe what the member for Radisson is pointing out are very valid and very useful suggestions in regard to the associations and the establishment of tenants associations within the complexes.

I will agree with her that they can and will perform a very valuable function in trying to make that complex more of a take-charge type of association and a unit that has the ability to contribute and be part of the ownership, if you want to call it, not in the physical sense but a pride of participation in that complex.

I do not disagree with the member in the value that tenant associations would have in all complexes, and the encouragement of it should be of prime importance by peoples that get involved and people that can think that they can contribute to a betterment within that complex, so I do not disagree with the member at all.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I thank the minister for that answer, and I think that, as he said a number of times, we are on the same wavelength in this area. I am disappointed that due to procedural requirements we cannot consider some of the ideas that I had put forward formally, but I am pleased to see that the minister is in agreement.

I want to ask the minister if he will consider some of the things that we have discussed tonight with respect to the Housing Authority and the new board. Will some of these ideas be brought forward?

**Mr. Reimer:** A lot of the suggestions that were brought forth in the discussions by all members around the table this evening are very valid and very worthy of consideration. I can give the assurances to all members that a lot of the suggestions would come into play with regard to any type of direction that we want to take or we feel it is the betterment for Manitoba Housing, and certainly the suggestions brought forth by the member for Radisson are worthy of consideration in all types of valuations.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Clause 3—pass.

**Mr. Reimer:** I was just wanting to, before we get too far and finish with the act here—believe it or not, there is a certain amendment that we have to bring forth at this time. So I would just like to thank the members for their participation, their involvement, their input into the various discussions. It all revolves around the last clause here that we are just getting translated. Coming into force, 4. This act comes into force on the day it receives Royal Assent.

There seems to be a problem that what would happen is that the existing board would have no authority to make any decisions, and the suggestion was made that this clause be amended to say that once it comes into force upon proclamation instead of when it receives Royal Assent. It is a matter of getting this done. [interjection] In a sense, but I guess what it is, we do not want to have the board with no chair.

**Mr. Mike Radcliffe (River Heights):** I would move adjournment at this point until ten o'clock tomorrow morning in order to give the Clerk's Office time to translate.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Radcliffe, although I appreciate your suggestion, we are just a short minute away from finalization.

**Mr. Radcliffe:** I will withdraw my motion at this point.

**Mr. Reimer:** I would like to move an amendment, moved by myself,

THAT section 4 be struck out and the following substituted:

#### **Coming into force**

4 This act comes into force on a day fixed by proclamation.

#### **[French version]**

Il est proposé que l'article 4 soit remplacé par ce qui suit:

#### **Entrée en vigueur**

4 La présente loi entre en vigueur le jour fixé par proclamation.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Is there discussion on the amendment?

**Some Honourable Members:** Question.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Shall the amendment pass?

**Some Honourable Members:** Pass.

**Mr. Chairperson:** The amendment is accordingly passed.

Shall Clause 4 as amended pass?

**Some Honourable Members:** Pass.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Clause 4 is accordingly passed as amended.

Preamble—pass; title—pass. Shall the bill as amended be reported?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

#### **Voice Vote**

**Mr. Chairperson:** All those in favour.

**Some Honourable Members:** Yea.

**Mr. Chairperson:** All those opposed.

**Some Honourable Members:** Nay.

**Mr. Chairperson:** It is the opinion of the Chair that the Yeas have it.

**Ms. Cerilli:** A counted vote.

#### **Formal Vote**

*A COUNT-OUT VOTE was taken, the result being as follows: Yeas 6, Nays 4.*

**Mr. Chairperson:** The bill will be reported by a count of six in favour, four against.

The time is now nine bells. What is the will of the committee?

Committee rise.

**COMMITTEE ROSE AT: 9 p.m.**