

The Assembly met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. Goohsen: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy today to present a petition. I'll read the prayer to you:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to put aside any consideration of forcing small-business owners to pay 100 per cent of the costs involved with digging up underground storage tanks and replacing them, and instead offer alternatives through abandoning regulations calling for digging up underground tanks, with the exception of those tanks which have been proven to be leaking, cost sharing or another alternative agreed upon by all parties affected.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners ever pray.

We have petitions from my constituency, a small town of Fox Valley. We also have from Piapot several signatures, as well as from the town of Maple Creek and surrounding area. And we also have a few from the Climax, Swift Current, and Bracken areas of the province, Mr. Speaker. And I'm proud to present them on behalf of these petitioners today.

Mr. D'Autremont: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have petitions today:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to put aside any consideration of forcing small-business owners to pay 100 per cent of the costs involved with digging up underground storage tanks and replacing them, and instead offer alternatives through abandoning regulations calling for digging up underground tanks, with the exception of those tanks which have been proven to be leaking, cost-sharing or other alternative agreed upon by all parties.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

These petitions, Mr. Speaker, come from Carnduff and Alida in my constituency; also from Stoughton, Weyburn, Heward, Creelman, Mr. Speaker; Ridgedale and Tisdale and Zenon Park in the north-east. I present these.

Mr. Britton: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too have several petitions I would like to lay on the Table today. I will read the prayer also:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to put

aside any consideration of forcing small-business owners to pay 100 per cent of the cost involved with digging up underground storage tanks and replacing them, and instead offer alternatives through abandoning regulations calling for digging up of underground tanks, with the exception of those tanks which have been proved to be leaking, cost sharing or other alternatives agreed upon by all parties affected.

As in duty bound, your petitioners ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, these signatures range all the way from Cupar, Lanigan, Qu'Appelle, Saskatoon, as far north as Meadow Lake, Mr. Speaker, and Muskeg Lake. They range almost as far north as we go. And I so present them.

Mr. Toth: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too have a petition I'd like to present to the Assembly. I'd like to read into the records the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to put aside any consideration of forcing small-business owners to pay 100 per cent of the costs involved with digging up underground storage tanks and replacing them, and instead offer alternatives through abandoning regulations calling for digging up underground tanks, with the exception of those tanks which have been proven to be leaking, cost sharing or another alternative agreed upon by all parties affected.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, these petitions are signed by individuals from the communities of Wawota, Fairlight, Moosomin, Yorkton, Canora, Buchanan, Saltcoats, Saskatoon -- across this province. I so present them.

Mr. Boyd: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I as well have petitions with regard to underground storage tanks and the cost of replacing them and digging them up. These petitioners from, actually from the minister's constituency, some of them are from Elrose, Wartime, a number of them from the Elrose area particularly; and within my constituency, Hoosier, Smiley, Kindersley, Eaton, Flaxcombe, and a number of other places, Mr. Speaker.

And I present them now.

Mr. Swenson: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have petitions to present to the Assembly today, and I'll just read the prayer into the records, sir.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to put aside any consideration of forcing small-business owners to pay 100 per cent of the costs involved with digging up

underground storage tanks or replacing them, and instead offer alternatives through abandoning regulations calling for digging up underground tanks, with the exception of those tanks which have been proven to be leaking, cost sharing or another alternative agreed upon by all parties affected.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I have citizens from the communities of Rouleau, Hearne, Spring Valley, Briercrest, Moose Jaw, Biggar, Saskatchewan; Springside, Yorkton, Saskatchewan -- citizens from all over the province, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Devine: -- Mr. Speaker, I too have petitions to present today with respect to the digging up of underground tanks. And these people are from across the province: certainly from my riding, Torquay and Estevan; several from the north-east part of the province, Carrot River and Nipawin; Cumberland House as well; a large number from Prince Albert; and Buchanan, Mr. Speaker, from Pelly constituency. And these citizens obviously have agreed with other petitioners and would like some reason put back into the legislation and to the government's efforts with respect to tanks.

I do so table now.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

Mr. Swenson: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I shall on Friday next move first reading of a Bill to amend The Government Organization Act (Executive Council Reduction).

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Ms. Crofford: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly, a group of 25 students from Athabasca School. Athabasca is so close to my back door that I can lean out and help with playground supervision during the times when they get to get out and play. They're accompanied today by Mrs. McCutcheon, Mrs. Martin, Mrs. Dayton, Mrs. Schentag, and Mrs. Soriano. Mrs. McCutcheon is the teacher.

I'll meet you for a photo at 2:20 and then we'll visit after. And I hope you'll have some hard questions for me. Would everybody join me in welcoming them.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce some 23 grade 4 students from St. Pius X school in Regina. They are seated in your gallery; and I will be meeting with them after question period for pictures and refreshments. They are accompanied by Ms. Nathalie Brissette, their teacher; and I would also ask all members in the House to join me in welcoming the students and their teacher.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and through you to members of the House three high school students who are involved in the young public servant for a day program. Mr. Speaker, these students are seated in your gallery.

The purpose of this program is to increase the awareness of the value of the public service amongst high school students and the general public as well. And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, this program . . . this is the third year of this program, it has been very successful; and I am told that it's very popular amongst the students and the public servants who act as their mentors for the day.

Mr. Speaker, we have with us Teresa Drew, Brad Miller, and Kimberly Kovacs, and I ask all members to join with us in welcoming these students to the House today. Thank you.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Sonntag: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have proof positive for you today that people don't always leave Saskatchewan to go to B.C. (British Columbia). We have in our gallery a cousin of mine from B.C. who is here visiting us in Saskatchewan today. I would like all members to welcome my cousin, Jerome Capelle, from Dawson Creek, B.C., who is here to enjoy the proceedings and visit a bit later on. So if you join with me, please.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me. And I want to say that I sincerely mean that, especially today, because I have my sister and her husband from Saskatoon with me. She was thinking . . . might be a bit worried about whether or not I had any influence with the Speaker at all. Of course I know that I don't, but thank you for recognizing me.

Mr. Speaker, to you and to the members of the House, I'd like to introduce my sister -- there are two of us in the family -- Ann Koral and her husband Walter. They are accompanied by two of their friends from Saskatoon, Regena and Nicholas Blocka.

They've come down to check up on me and to see whether or not I'm doing the job. And they're in the Speaker's gallery and I'd like the members to welcome them.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: -- Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to introduce a special person this afternoon, a grade 12 student, Janine Jeworski, who is here with us today seated in the west gallery as part of the Institute of Public Administration of Canada's program and Regina's regional 5th annual young

public-servant-for-a-day event. I want to say a special welcome to Janine. She's here from the Greenall High School in Balgonie.

And accompanying her today is a special friend of ours, Hermine Plumiers, who is the director of communications from SEDCO (Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation). And they will be spending the day over-viewing SEDCO's role in the provincial economy and the actions that it is taking to help the recovery we're now involved in.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Crofford: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just noticed two additional guests in your gallery, Kelly Miner and Mark Hollyoak, who are representatives for RWDSU (Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union) and are long-time work associates. I'd like everybody to join me in welcoming them.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Rolfes: -- I hope the members will allow the Speaker to also welcome a couple of people. I would be remiss in not welcoming the sister of the Premier. Even though it's important that she is the sister of the Premier, it's more important that she is a constituent of the Speaker. So I do want to welcome you and your husband to the Assembly.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Opening of Uncle Mac's Variety Shack in Kamsack

Mr. Harper: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to inform the Assembly of an exceptional example of community development, the recent opening of the Uncle Mac's Variety Shack at Kamsack organized by the MacKenzie Society.

The Uncle Mac's used-clothing store is contributing to the community in two important areas -- providing employment for people with disabilities and helping the environment through recycling. Uncle Mac's has given the opportunity to disabled people to do very important and valuable work. Jobs will include sorting, repairing, and preparing used clothing for sale in their store. It will also recycle unsold clothing into rags.

The profits from the Uncle Mac's store will return to the MacKenzie Society, a non-profit organization, to improve the services it provides for people with disabilities. The MacKenzie Society provides the services for people at their training centre located in Preeceville; the vocational services, as well as planning and management activities. And, Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the board in this very important initiative and wish them luck.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Jeux Canada Games

Ms. Lorje: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday in Saskatoon the Jeux Canada Games Foundation held a press conference to give some good news to Saskatchewan sports organizations. For four years I was proud to be on the organizing committee of the Jeux Canada Games held in Saskatoon in 1989. One of the legacies of those games was the creation of an endowment fund. This fund provides annual grants equal to the accumulated interest on the fund. The grants announced yesterday are the fourth set since the games.

An ongoing goal of the Jeux Canada Games, wherever they are held, is to leave a permanent heritage to the host community. We certainly did this in Saskatoon. Hosting the 1989 games left us with a fine legacy in facilities and development opportunities in sport. The foundation is following the lead of the games by targeting its grants towards projects which assist in the development of sport in Saskatchewan.

This year the legacy of the games carries on well beyond the year 1989. Grants in the amount of \$122,600 were awarded to seven community based groups, 17 provincial sports governing bodies, five zone sports councils, and two service organizations. These grants covered the province from Estevan to Meadow Lake. Saskatoon hosted the games from Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan shares the benefits.

Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to have been involved at the beginning. I am pleased to see the goals of the foundation being carried on, and I congratulate President Marty Irwin and his executive for their wise stewardship of this fund to further Saskatchewan amateur sport.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Milestone Indoor Rodeo

Ms. Bradley: -- Last weekend the third annual Milestone indoor rodeo took place. This event is sanctioned by the Canadian Cowboy Association. It involves over 200 contestants who ride, rope, bulldog, and race. And, Mr. Speaker, contestants came from all over Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Alberta, Montana, and North Dakota.

This was not just a sporting event, Mr. Speaker. This was a community get-together which involved the whole town and district. More signs of that Saskatchewan vibrancy members have been talking about. During the three days there were two dances, three professional rodeo competitions, a bingo, a ranch rodeo, and a church service.

The ranch rodeo was a new event introduced this year. It allowed local up-and-coming cowboys and cowgirls to get a taste of participation and competition in a number of fun events. Over 2,000 participants and spectators alike enjoyed the competition, the hospitality, and the food. And as a matter of fact, over 500 pounds of beef was served on kaiser buns during

the weekend.

An event like this did not just happen. The Milestone Rodeo Association planned and ran the rodeo, but volunteers far too numerous to name, did their bit as well. The fire-fighters, curling club, hockey and figure skating associations, and dozens of individuals, made the event a success.

The Milestone ambulance was there, and fortunately was not needed.

Congratulations to the rodeo association and community and I look forward to next year's event. Happy trails to you. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Agricultural Technology Agreements

Mrs. Teichrob: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I am pleased to announce to the Assembly that two very important and exciting agreements for Saskatchewan were confirmed this week.

First, the province, along with the Monsanto Company of St. Louis, Missouri, have signed a memorandum of understanding to cooperate in areas of mutual interest and benefit, which include conservation and farming practices and biotechnology. There were three proposals under the agreement, which included a long-term joint initiative for the genetic transformation of cereal grains for industrial applications, promotion of dry land conservation farming practices and technologies, and establishment of an agricultural soil conservation information network.

Secondly, a three-year, \$1.6 million program which involved the Saskatchewan Soil Conservation Association, Agri-Food Canada, Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food, Monsanto, TransAlta Corporation, and the PFRA (Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration) is going to enhance soil conservation by promoting the benefits of direct seeding among Saskatchewan farmers. The program will offer direct seeding workshops to farmers and provide farm visits and consultation services to assist farmers in making this transition.

Mr. Speaker, these two agreements have the potential to create hundreds of jobs province-wide, while at the same time helping the environment of the province. Through alliances with global companies such as these, Saskatchewan is able to grow by building on its own strength. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ambassador Program for Esterhazy

Mr. Knezacek: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So far in my young life I've been a teacher; I'm currently an MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) and a farmer; I am widely recognized as an innovative and highly disciplined motivator of some hockey players

of dubious skills and talent.

And tonight, Mr. Speaker, I will have an opportunity to become an ambassador. Tonight the Esterhazy Town Council is hosting a dinner at which Esterhazy's ambassadorship program will be kicked off. A minimum of 10 residents will share the honour and be declared economic ambassadors for Esterhazy -- a very worthy honour.

Mr. Speaker, official certificates will be issued to the ambassadors indicating the high status of the program. That's not quite a car and a chauffeur, but a great privilege none the less.

Our special guest for this innovative program will be Laurier LaPierre, a well-known Canadian journalist and current Max Bell visiting professor at the School of Journalism at the University of Regina.

Our role as ambassadors will be to promote economic development in and for Esterhazy, and we all hope that our efforts will enhance the community. In real terms, Mr. Speaker, this event is one more piece of evidence that the people of Saskatchewan and their communities are actively involved in working to improve economic viability of our province and the quality of life we like to call the Saskatchewan way.

They are doing it themselves, not depending on outside megaprojects or government hand-outs or manna from heaven. I am proud to be a participating ambassador. As a team, we all intend to take our duties very seriously. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Visit of Roberta Bondar

Ms. Murray: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it has truly been said that to really appreciate something you must first leave it. We have as a visitor to Saskatchewan yesterday and today, a person who has tested that statement in a highly original way. Dr. Roberta Bondar, Canada's first female astronaut and a true friend of the earth, is in Regina today after spending yesterday in Saskatoon. We were to have had the opportunity of having Dr. Bondar introduced to the Assembly later this afternoon, but her busy schedule will not permit a side-trip here. Besides, Mr. Speaker, her work here is to meet as many school children as possible to talk about the environment and that, I think we can all agree, is more important than receiving one more recognition.

Mr. Speaker, in 90 seconds one cannot begin to list Dr. Bondar's accomplishments which are well-known. Her visit here has two main purposes, one of which I have alluded to. She is the spokesperson for the Friends of the Environment Foundation which is supported by Canada Trust and its customers. The foundation is giving a grant to the Saskatchewan Science Centre today.

And very appropriately, during National Wildlife Week, she is talking to schools, promoting

environmental common sense by suggesting projects such as the ones we have heard mentioned in the last two days.

I had the honour to meet Dr. Bondar this morning. I was impressed. I welcome her to Saskatchewan for us all. Thank you.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

SaskPower Contracts

Mr. Boyd: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the minister responsible for SaskPower. Mr. Minister, could you tell me how many contracts SaskPower has awarded to a company called Advanced Ag & Industrial Ltd., of Biggar, and what is the total value of those contracts?

Hon. Mr. Anguish: -- I don't know the specific answer to that question; it's quite detailed. If the member would have given me notice prior to question period I would have been more than happy to have had that information here for him. But as a result, I'll take notice of the question, Mr. Speaker, and provide the answer at a later date.

Mr. Boyd: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, I have here a letter from SaskPower confirming that Advanced Ag & Industrial Ltd. recently received a SaskPower contract to install a number of fuel storage tanks at Whitesand dam in northern Saskatchewan.

The significance of this is that one of the owners and the general manager of this company is Jack Messer's son, Mike. Mr. Minister, Jack Messer is awarding a major SaskPower contract to his son's company. Mr. Minister, is this not a clear case of conflict of interest, something your party roundly criticized when you were in opposition?

Mr. Minister, what actions are you going to take against Jack Messer for awarding contracts to his son?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Anguish: -- As in the previous question, Mr. Speaker, I'll take notice of that and certainly get back to the member. And if there's something inappropriate, we'll discuss the action to be taken at that time.

Mr. Boyd: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, the facts on this are very clear. Jack Messer's son is one of the owners of Advanced Ag & Industrial Ltd. Advanced Ag & Industrial Ltd. has received contracts to sell fuel tanks to SaskPower.

They're even quite proud of this fact, Mr. Minister. I have here a copy of the company's beautiful colour flyer which is with a picture of one of their SaskPower tanks right on the front. And the flyer says: get an envirotank advantage.

And I have to admit, if your father is Jack Messer, your company does have quite an advantage in this province. The problem is, Mr. Minister, the rest of Saskatchewan taxpayers wind up paying for that advantage through higher taxes and higher power bills.

Mr. Minister, why are you allowing Jack Messer to hand out major SaskPower contracts to his son?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Anguish: -- As I stated, Mr. Speaker, it would have been nice if the member would have given me advance notice of that kind of a detailed question. I will find out the information and report back to the member.

But I think it should be kept in mind if the situation is a tender situation and the company is low tender, I see nothing wrong . . .

The Speaker: -- Order. The minister has taken notice.

Mr. Boyd: -- Mr. Minister, let's just go over a few of Jack Messer's accomplishments in the last couple of months. First, he single-handedly rips one of the economic cornerstones of your government's 1993 throne speech by cancelling co-generation. Done. Gone.

Then he gets the government to pay \$20,000 in taxpayers' money so he can take over his neighbour's farm. Then he gives his business partner, David Dombowsky, a big, fat personal services contract with SaskPower. And now he's doling out SaskPower contracts to his son.

That's a pretty impressive record, Mr. Minister. And who winds up paying for Jack Messer's little empire-building agenda? Saskatchewan taxpayers through increased taxes and increased power rates.

Mr. Minister, it's time for Jack Messer's little tin pot . . .

The Speaker: -- Order, order. Does the member have a question? Order. Member, ask his question.

Mr. Boyd: -- Mr. Minister, it's time for you to do something about Jack Messer and his little dictatorship over at SaskPower.

Mr. Minister, will you stand up for the people of Saskatchewan and the taxpayers of Saskatchewan and fire Jack Messer?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Anguish: -- Well in terms of the number of issues that the hon. member raises, I'd first point out that Jack Messer did not cancel co-generation. I take full responsibility. I made the decision to defer co-generation at this point in time.

In regard to dollars to Jack Messer for his farm, Jack Messer got not one cent in the issue the member refers

to. In the case of David Dombowsky, David Dombowsky's credentials are in excess of what it would require to do the job that he's been contracted to do. And I don't know why you would run down Mr. Dombowsky in this legislature.

In terms of paying for things by the rate increase that was announced for April 1, I point out to the hon. member opposite that in 1992 the Crown corporations that could declare a dividend to the Crown Investments Corporation in excess of about \$170 million, not one cent of that got from CIC (Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan) into the Consolidated Fund. In fact the Consolidated Fund still had to put into Crown Investments Corporation in excess of \$4 million because the money that went in there went to pay for the bad deals that your administration made when you were office.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, I guess it was a little naive of me to expect you to do something about Jack Messer. It's a little bit like asking the chimp to fire the organ-grinder. So I'll direct my next question to the Premier.

Mr. Premier, you campaigned long and hard against political appointees taking advantage of Saskatchewan taxpayers, and now your NDP (New Democratic Party) campaign manager is making a mockery of your government and the people of this province . . .

The Speaker: -- Order, order. I know that a number of members aren't interested in the question, but the member does have a right to ask a question, and I please . . . will members please just settle down and allow him to ask his question. And I wish the member would cut down on his preamble just a bit. Order.

Mr. Boyd: -- Thank you. Mr. Premier, your NDP campaign manager is making a mockery of your government and the people of the province by using SaskPower as his own personal patronage machine. Surely you must recognize that Jack Messer doling out contracts to his son's company is a conflict of interest in the highest order and simply cannot be allowed.

Mr. Premier, will you do the right thing, will you stand up for Saskatchewan taxpayers and fire Jack Messer?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Anguish: -- I find the hon. member opposite very entertaining. I've been called a chump before but I've never been called a chimp, and I certainly have now.

But I have indicated to the hon. member, I'll take notice of those questions that you've posed here this afternoon and I'll report back to the Legislative Assembly.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Underground Fuel Tanks

Mr. D'Autremont: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of the Environment. Mr. Minister, I understand you met this morning with members of the Environmental Fairness Association, service station owners who are being forced to spend thousands of dollars to replace their underground fuel tanks.

It's kind of an interesting coincidence that these business owners are being forced to replace their tanks with exactly the same kind of tank that Jack Messer's son is now manufacturing.

Mr. Minister, after hearing the tremendous hardship this policy is placing on those businesses and communities all over Saskatchewan, what changes will you be making to this policy as a result of this morning's meeting?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wiens: -- Mr. Speaker, I just want to remind the members of the history of this issue; that this was in fact the regulatory matter that your colleagues in government introduced in the late '80s. And when I took over the department, we put a committee in place to examine the regulations that were in place and came forward with an action plan last spring to address some of the shortcomings that you had left there.

Part of that action plan was to establish an advisory committee of which the members you speak of are a part. And after the meeting this morning, they agreed to take the issues that they had raised with me back to the committee so that when they are done consulting with all the members at the table, they can give me a collective committee report.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: -- Thank you, Mr. Minister. It's nice to hear that you're consulting. But are you listening? Because once again we see your government carrying through on a policy that's going to drive businesses and jobs out of this province.

SUMA (Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association) estimates that between 2 and 300 service stations will close down in Saskatchewan as a result of this tank policy. And not only will service stations close, but municipalities and school boards will have added costs and there will be an enormous tax loss to municipalities and school boards at a time when their funding is being cut back by the government. And these cut-backs will also cost jobs.

There are no new jobs being created to replace those lost, other than the jobs created by Jack Messer's son. Mr. Minister, what are you going to do to cushion the blow to small businesses and municipalities?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wiens: -- Mr. Speaker, again may I remind the members opposite that this is a difficult circumstance and one that I wish the members opposite wouldn't begin to politicize.

The fact is that the danger from leaking underground storage tanks is the danger resulting from worn-out equipment and the cost of replacing that equipment. The members opposite raised regulations in the last session during their term of government that obviously were inadequate because they left the circumstances in such a way that it caused difficulties for owners without a clear plan to consult to resolve the problem. The members opposite have a history of leaving the province with messes that we are left to clean up.

I am telling the members opposite that we created an advisory committee and we expect the report from them. And I can tell you that unless you mistrust the people on the committee, with whom you have spoken, you ought to wait like the rest of us for the recommendations they will bring us.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Farm Bankruptcy Legislation

Mr. McPherson: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is to the Minister of Agriculture. Mr. Minister, yesterday we attempted again to raise the issue of needed changes to The Saskatchewan Farm Security Act in this Assembly. Rather than put forward a cooperative effort and speak to the urgency of issues, members opposite were confrontational and derogatory.

Mr. Minister, hundreds of farm families face eviction from their land if you do not move quickly to introduce an amendment to this legislation. So, Mr. Minister, if you're not going to support our changes to the Saskatchewan legislation, tell us today what you will do. When will you give us a commitment to change the Saskatchewan legislation to fix this problem?

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member opposite for that question. We indeed are working on this very serious problem and we will be bringing amendments that will do the job properly with the Saskatchewan legislation.

Our major problem with this is that most of this legislation is federal -- the Bankruptcy Act is federal -- and the definition of farmer in that Act is one of the biggest problems, and we have been urging the federal government to clean up their Act to protect farmers. We will do what we have to do and we will do it right here in Saskatchewan; but I would call on the federal Liberals to clean up the federal Act, which is where the major problem is.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McPherson: -- Mr. Speaker, Mr. Minister, the problem is not with the federal government; it's with

your government. It's your legislation that has the problem. Mr. Minister, you have hundreds of bureaucrats and legal experts working for the Department of Justice and the Department of Agriculture.

Your government has been in power for two and a half years and has known for months the problems with The Saskatchewan Farm Security Act. You have made it a priority to draft 28 pages of amendments to the labour standards legislation and 22 pages of amendments to The Trade Union Act, because you obviously consider these to be priorities. Well, Mr. Minister, we consider the eviction of farm families from their land to be a priority.

So, Mr. Minister, with all the staff you have in the Department of Justice, can you tell me exactly what legal advice you have on your government's responsibilities to address the loopholes in The Farm Security Act?

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: -- Mr. Speaker, the legal advice that we have is that the protection of farm families and the Bankruptcy Act rest primarily with the federal government. We will act within our jurisdiction and we think we can plug those loopholes. We have been working on that diligently since the results of the Mulatz case in the court case which creates the problem.

Again I reiterate that most of the problem, and particularly with the definition of farmer, is in the federal Bankruptcy Act over which we have no jurisdiction. And I think it's the federal Liberals who are ignoring the farmers, not us -- as they're ignoring the farmers on the durum war and on the Crow rate and a whole lot of other issues.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McPherson: -- Mr. Speaker, Mr. Minister, that's what we're asking you, to do what is within your own jurisdiction, not to always lay blame onto the federal government. It's what you can do with your legislation. It's that provincial government that brought in leaseback rights in the first place.

We've had numerous calls from people who deal with farm insolvency, and they're all very supportive of the amendments that we've put forward. And some suggestions have even . . .

The Speaker: -- Order, order. I'm just simply going to tack on the extra time that the government members are taking in interfering with the member asking, because I cannot hear the question. And I wish members would give him the privilege and the right to ask his question.

Mr. McPherson: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Of all the people that we've been dealing with, who themselves deal within the farm insolvency laws, all of them agree that it is fully within the power and the mandate of the provincial government, which created leaseback rights in the first place, to protect them within their

own Farm Security Act, regardless of what may be done at the federal level. What no one can understand is why your government has acted so negatively towards amending The Saskatchewan Farm Security Act.

So I ask you, Mr. Minister, will you table with the House the records of legal advice and consultation that demonstrates that it is not possible to close a small but crucial loophole to The Farm Security Act. Will you table that information?

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: -- Mr. Speaker, I reiterate, we are trying to close that loophole. The legal advice that we have is that the legislation proposed by the member opposite would not stop the loophole. It is not good legislation, would not be constitutional, would not work.

We are working on legislation that will work. We're going to attempt to plug that loophole. But to say that farm land security and bankruptcy is a provincial jurisdiction is totally wrong. Ask the federal government what they did with our leaseback provisions and how FCC (Farm Credit Corporation) has complied with it.

And again, we are working with the federal government to get them to comply with our leaseback legislation. There is a court case now over the jurisdiction of whether or not the provincial or the federal government has jurisdiction over forcing FCC to comply with the leaseback. The farmer that took the Farm Credit to court lost on that issue, and we have appealed it. That is pending. We are working with the federal government to try to work another court settlement on that. And we wish the members opposite would try to constructively plug loopholes and protect farm families rather than grandstanding here in the legislature with legislation that is not practical, and written by somebody who has no knowledge of the law.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McPherson: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, I find it amazing that the Minister of Agriculture can't put forward a legal opinion on our amendment. We've put forward amendments. He can't put forward an amendment or a legal opinion on their own Bill.

Mr. Minister, this change is needed; this change is doable; this change is within your power to fix; and this change should be done now. So, Mr. Minister, what are you going to do, right today?

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: -- Right today, Mr. Speaker, we are working on an amendment that will do the job, and in due course we will have an amendment in here and it will be one that we think will do the job and that will work.

Again, I would give the member opposite Mr. Goodale's number: 585-2202. If you want to really plug the loophole and protect farmers, do what I do

and call Mr. Goodale.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Labour Legislation

Mr. Goohsen: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Labour. Mr. Minister, while your government is bending over backwards to appease the union leaders responsible for your election victory, other jurisdictions are recognizing that the powerful and overpaid unions must be a part of the fight against the deficit.

In Prince Edward Island the provincial government is moving to reduce salaries, including the union salaries, by 7.5 per cent. Now a 7.5 per cent decrease in salaries in Saskatchewan would save taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars. In fact, Minister, as much as \$180 million could be saved.

Mr. Minister, why are you promoting salary increases, extended benefits, and increasing the powers of the union in this province while other jurisdictions are moving in exactly the opposite direction within our country?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: -- Mr. Speaker, I want to answer the question on behalf of the government because to me this points out the fundamental contradiction of both the Progressive Conservative official opposition and the third party Liberal opposition as well.

For days on end in this legislature, they have been attacking this government for presumably breaking contracts and other statutory provisions with respect in one case in point, the judges, as an example. Here we have the Progressive Conservative critic getting up and saying, break the contracts; break the statutory obligations when it comes to working men and women.

And he cites as an example, Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government that is doing it exactly. The Liberal government is doing it, which tells me and tells the people of the province of Saskatchewan this: as far as Liberals and Conservatives are concerned, break the contracts of working men and women, those at the bottom end of the scale, protect the 24 per cent increases for the judges. I say that's hypocrisy and it's wrong.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goohsen: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Bob Rae did it, Mr. Premier. And there appears to be only one contract that you're prepared to consider to be sacred in this province, and that is the contract that you have with your political friends in the unions. You stomped all over nearly every other contract but you wouldn't dare touch the unions, who are the single largest contributors to the NDP in this province.

Mr. Minister, your union-preference policies and your

changes to The Trade Union Act are a slap in the face for small business, for local governments, for health, for education boards, and for Saskatchewan taxpayers in general. The people of Prince Edward Island are rolling back wages across the board and they have no qualms about including the unions.

Mr. Minister, very simply, will you consider rolling back the union benefits and wages, and reduce the deficit and save the taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars? And also, do something to offset the negative effects of Bill 32 and Bill 54 in this province?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: -- Mr. Speaker, the hon. member persists in his position. I want to say the civil servants in this province and the trade union movement in this province has acted responsibly. We are proud of the fact that we were able to negotiate freely, collective bargaining agreements with, for example, the Saskatchewan Government Employees' Union, on a three-year contract in which the members, the civil servants, members of this government -- both as citizens and workers of the government, citizens of the province and workers of the government -- recognized their obligation. They did it by a freely collective bargaining agreement, and I might add that in the consequence our budget is bang on.

The Prince Edward Island budget of the Liberal government is 180 per cent off base. And instead of looking to the large corporations, instead of looking to the large corporations, instead of looking to fair taxation, what the Liberals are doing and the Conservatives are doing, is they're trying to squeeze the last ounce of decency and livelihood out of the working men and women of their province. I say shame on the Liberals and shame on the Conservatives for taking that position. That's not our position.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goohsen: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Premier, shame on you for distorting the facts in this province that are clear. And the facts are clearly this. Your province's test for your government is simply this: your two election promises. First of all, you promised jobs. You said you'd wipe out poverty and you'd create jobs. You said you would create a different approach to financing; that there would be no more deficits; and that we would be free and clear of all that. You haven't done either.

Show me, Mr. Premier, where you have created one job in this province with your legislation. Show me where you have made one dollar to pay off the deficit through the legislation that's going to drive jobs out of this province in Bill 32 or Bill 54.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: -- Mr. Speaker, the hon. member again refuses, as do both of the opposition

parties, to be bothered by any of the facts. One has to simply take a look at the job creation record over the last little while, and I think the honest assessment is that jobs are being created. They're not being created as quickly as we'd like them to be created, that is for sure, but we have a game plan and it is beginning to work.

But the key point here about this debate, Mr. Speaker, as far as the Conservatives and the Liberals are concerned, is simply this: how in the world are they going to balance this budget and how do their priorities fit up against our priorities? And I say that Liberals in the Maritimes as shown by the P.E.I. (Prince Edward Island) and Conservatives in Alberta . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . If the hon. member would simply stop chirping from his seat and listen to the facts, he might learn something here.

The Speaker: -- Order. The member from Maple Creek can't come up and ask his question and then yell at the Premier when he's answering the question. Order, order.

Hon. Mr. Romanow: -- Mr. Speaker, I'll simply conclude my answer by saying two things. First of all, the hon. member from Maple Creek and the opposition of the Conservatives and the Liberals, they seem to have an aversion to truth every time that it's said in this legislature as justified and evidenced by their actions.

But I want to tell the member -- he asked about jobs -- we've created 3,000 new manufacturing jobs alone under the **Partnership for Renewal** program under the Statistics Canadian documents which were released a few days ago. We need to do more about this and we're going to pursue it.

But I'll tell you this, if the hon. member says that fair and honest and decent legislation for working men and women -- part-timers, those who are at the bottom of the scale, those who need the protection -- if they cast the blame on economic recovery on those people and on the trade union people, I say we've got a major philosophical difference. That's not the way they built this province. These are the men and the women who built this province with their hard labour and we're supporting them and you should be joining us instead of attacking them.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premier wanted to be reminded of the facts. His NDP buddy Bob Rae had no problem rolling back salaries in the great province of Ontario because of the economic mess that he made there.

Mr. Premier, you talk about people at the low end. I'll remind you of the facts: over 81,000 of the citizens of this province are on welfare, sir; 12,000 less jobs than when you took office, sir; the average family's taxes up \$2,600 a year, sir. Those are the facts.

Your Minister of Labour refuses to bring into this

Assembly any indication that these two Bills will take one person off of welfare or add one new job or drop those taxes one dollar, Mr. Premier. Those are the facts.

Now, Mr. Premier, stand in this House and tell us that these two pieces of legislation are going to help those people on welfare, they're going to take down those taxes, or they're going to bring one new job to this province, sir.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: -- Mr. Speaker, the simple answer to the question is yes, we think that this is going to help all people in the province of Saskatchewan, not only those who are working on a part-time basis but trade unionists and those who are on welfare and the job opportunities that are going flow for them as a result of **Partnership for Renewal**.

But the hon. member in his preamble to the question talks about the people on welfare. Yes, there's been an increase in the numbers of people on welfare. Why? Because once again the Conservatives and the Liberals -- two different legs, one being Tory out of office, one being Liberal in office, they're two same legs but the same old chicken -- they produced this result.

You offloaded by the changes to the UI (Unemployment Insurance) and the status treaty Indians, resulting in increased numbers across Canada and the amount in the thousands in the province of Saskatchewan, and the Liberals did the same by their changes to the UI. And then the member has the audacity of saying that somehow that's our fault.

I say to the hon. member, why don't you two people get your act together, make the marriage complete, join the Liberal-Conservative, have a caucus and decide what your line is, but please stop this inconsistent and brutal attack on the working people of the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Carrot River Saw Mill Expansion

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to inform the Assembly of an announcement I made this morning for a major capital investment in Carrot River and the Carrot River saw mill, an investment that protects jobs, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: -- Mr. Speaker, this government is committed to protecting and creating jobs and I ask the members opposite to listen up. This week alone we have seen hope for new jobs from the signing of an MOU, a memorandum of

understanding, with Monsanto that holds the promise for hundreds of jobs in rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: -- We have seen the announcement of new mining jobs in La Ronge with the Cameco gold mine. And today I am announcing a promise of security for more than 200 people working in the forest industry in Hudson Bay and Carrot River.

We believe communities like Carrot River are communities with a future and that is why I was pleased to announce Saskatchewan Forest Products will be investing \$11.7 million to upgrade and modernize the Carrot River saw mill.

Mr. Speaker, this upgrade will convert the mill to a high-speed, 10-inch stud mill. Further to this, the capital expansion plan will be funded through the reinvestment of profits -- and I underline profits -- from Saskatchewan Forest Products operations and will be of no additional cost to the taxpayers, Mr. Speaker.

This capital upgrade will ensure the long-term viability of the Carrot River saw mill and the protection of 275 jobs. If no modernization were done, Mr. Speaker, SFPC (Saskatchewan Forest Products Corporation) would run out of lumber within five to seven years and this would have forced the lay-off of 275 people and the closure of plants in both Hudson Bay and Carrot River. With the earlier modernization of the Hudson Bay plant, we have secured the future of Saskatchewan Forest Products in north-eastern Saskatchewan, the future of its employees, and the future of these communities.

Mr. Speaker, forestry, as we all know, is an important industry. It impacts on our economy and on our environment. And that's why we must remain vigilant in our commitment to modernize so that our operations remain both competitive and sustainable. This expansion will do both.

The upgraded mill will reduce the wastage of wood and increase the utilization of our valuable timber resources. There will be improvements in operating efficiency and reduced operating costs. Finally, and most importantly, Mr. Speaker, the new stud mill will protect the jobs by utilizing smaller logs that are found in abundance in this forest block and by allowing the mill to operate on a sustainable yield basis in perpetuity.

Mr. Speaker, this investment is an investment of the future of Carrot River, an investment in the future of our province, and it will certainly permit us to continue to build a secure foundation and operate with certainty into the next century. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like

to thank the minister for sending across his statement earlier, Mr. Speaker.

I'm wondering, Mr. Speaker, if the minister is going to be able to elaborate a little bit on this issue down the road. I see a fairly significant expenditure of funds here. And I appreciate that the minister is talking about the guaranteeing of jobs in north-east of the province, and I applaud that.

However, a number of the issues that have been around for a long time in that area haven't been answered. The minister is well aware that the issue of the declining softwood lumber resources in that area mean that choices are going to have to be made. A lot of people in that area have maintained for a long time that the distribution of the timber resources have to be sorted out better than they have in the past.

The minister is talking about a very short-term fix here -- five to seven years -- compared to what is actually needed. The minister knows full well that the predominance of trees in that area are hardwood and that the use of that hardwood resource has to be figured out. There was a lot of that, Mr. Speaker, around the Simpson Timber mill that was in Hudson Bay. The minister hasn't answered any of those questions today. And I would have thought that if we had an announcement covering over \$11 million of Saskatchewan taxpayers' money that some of these issues would have been brought to the fore.

With the decline in the number of the larger trees -- I believe they're referred to as peeler bolts -- that were in use in that particular area and the fact that people were having to go further and further afield, it says to me, Mr. Speaker, that the government has come up with a short-term fix for what is a long-term problem in the timber industry in north-east Saskatchewan. And I would hope that the minister will be able to bring more explanation to the Legislation Assembly about the details surrounding this particular initiative so that we can make sure that those 200 jobs simply don't get this government past the next provincial election in north-east Saskatchewan.

The Speaker: -- Why is the member on his feet?

Mr. Sonntag: -- By leave, to introduce guests, Mr. Speaker.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Sonntag: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. She arrived late on the date of our birth and she's arrived late again. I would like to introduce to you in the gallery, Mr. Speaker, my twin sister who's just arrived a few minutes ago. And I would ask all members to join with me in welcoming her here today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1430)

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Electoral Boundaries Commission Report

Hon. Ms. Simard: -- At the conclusion of my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I will be making a motion that the report of the Electoral Boundaries Commission be approved and adopted by this Assembly.

On behalf of all members of the Saskatchewan legislature, I want to thank the commission for the work that they have done. The Constituency Boundaries Commission was composed of three highly qualified individuals. Judge Malone, a respected member of our Court of Queen's Bench, chaired the commission. He was joined by Professor Dan de Vlieger, dean of the Faculty of Arts at the University of Regina, and Nancy Kent, executive director of the Prince Albert Regional Economic Development Authority.

The commission was handed the difficult task of reducing the number of constituencies in the province from 66 to 58. This reduction is in keeping with our government's commitment to fiscal restraint. This is the first time since the Depression that the number of seats have been reduced and results in the lowest number of members since 1964.

Since being elected in 1991, all of our ministers and members have heard over and over again from Saskatchewan people that our government is too large. They have told us that 66 members are too many considering the size of the province. We have heard this everywhere from individuals and groups representing every point on the political and economic spectrum of the province.

The government has responded by reducing the number of members from 66 to 58. This is a significant reduction -- a reduction of 12 per cent. This legislation also moves us closer to the principle of one person, one vote. The commission was given the mandate of setting electoral boundaries based on the democratic principles of effective and equal representation. The principle of one person, one vote, is therefore the overriding principle that guided the work of the commission.

The Constituency Boundaries Act, 1993, moved us closer to this principle by reducing the acceptable variation from the constituency population quotient from the current plus or minus 25 per cent to plus or minus 5 per cent. Over the past 20 years the concept of one person, one vote, has suffered in Saskatchewan.

In 1971, 69 per cent of the seats in the Assembly fell within the 5 per cent population variance. This situation continued to worsen and by 1987 only 24 per cent of the seats fell within the 5 per cent population variance.

Another important principle that the government

instituted in the legislation that established the commission is that Saskatchewan is a single community of interests. The government realized that nothing is to be gained from making a distinction between urban and rural constituencies. The legislation therefore removed all reference to predetermined numbers of rural and urban constituencies.

Previously a set number of rural seats and a set number of urban seats were specified. This government saw that that division was artificial. Nothing is accomplished by the attempt to create an artificial division. The majority of Saskatchewan citizens come from a rural background, where they were either born and raised on a farm or in a small town. Forty-one out of the 54 members on the government side of this Assembly come from rural and small town backgrounds. Rural and urban people share the same interests in this province, and we must all work together with a singularity of purpose.

The Constituency Boundaries Commission held hearings around the province to solicit input from Saskatchewan people. The commission heard many presentations from many interested parties and some changes were made to the final report of the commission. There are, however, two alterations we propose to the commission's final recommendations. Those two changes have no impact on boundaries. It is not appropriate to attempt to substitute our judgement for that of the commission when it comes to the boundaries.

Instead, we propose two name changes: Wolf Willow to Wood Mountain, and Regina Victoria-University to Regina Victoria. Both of these changes are in the interests of making the constituency names relevant and the areas more identifiable to constituents.

Aside from these two changes, we put forward the report of the commission as a substantial improvement to the electoral map of our province. I believe the three members of the commission did a commendable job and deserve the thanks and gratitude of all members of this Assembly.

I would like to conclude in my remarks, Mr. Speaker, by making the following motion:

That the final report of the Constituency Boundaries Commission, established pursuant to The Constituency Boundaries Act, 1993, laid before this Assembly by the Hon. Mr. Speaker (sessional paper no. 40 of 1994), be altered by deleting the constituency name Regina Victoria-University and substituting therefor Regina Victoria, and by deleting the constituency name Wolf Willow and substituting therefor Wood Mountain, and that the report, as so altered, be approved and adopted by the Assembly.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr.

Speaker, I will be making a few remarks in regards to the comments just made by the minister, and after that I will be proposing an amendment to one of the name changes.

Mr. Speaker, we're a long ways down the road in this process now and I . . . it is pretty well a **fait accompli**. And I also would like to join with the minister in thanking our commission members who set out to perform a task which certainly wasn't easy, and of which they had very little latitude to deal with. The rules of the game were determined by this NDP government in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, some time ago. And certainly no one on that commission can be blamed for the havoc that is being wrought in rural Saskatchewan by this NDP government. This is just another example of what is happening, and that basically, Mr. Speaker, is the disenfranchising of a lot of people in this province.

And I say that with a great deal of honesty, Mr. Speaker, because one only has to look at what this government has done over the last two and a half years to the rural areas. And we've seen the debates in here because, Mr. Speaker, they've gone on and on; there's been agriculture issues, there's been health issues, there's been bus issues -- there have been so many issues, Mr. Speaker, that have dealt with rural people being marginalized.

And once again in the electoral boundaries process, the government came in with a very narrow agenda. It made sure that all of the seat reduction . . . and no one in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, disagrees with the government that we need fewer MLAs in this province. But these rules were specifically designed to make sure that all eight seats came out of rural areas.

I mean northern Saskatchewan can be set aside because of its distance, and its diversity, and its natural boundaries, and its trading areas, and be guaranteed its seats; so in effect, Mr. Speaker, we took eight seats away from 64 not 66. And that was all carefully thought out by the members of this NDP government when they laid out the rules for the commission to work by.

Mr. Speaker, what should have happened in this Legislative Assembly with this process is that one that would have allowed the commission the freedom to determine the best way of representing people in the province of Saskatchewan. And that's why they should have gone around and they should have held hearings and they should have listened to people and they should have talked to the folks who vote and elect and send people to this Assembly about what type of representation they wish to have, instead of the other way around, with very narrow rules being put in place.

I mean it didn't bother this government at all, Mr. Speaker, as they take away so much from rural Saskatchewan; they turn around and spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on an Electoral Commission who don't have any latitude.

It's like this health, this one-man health commission that we're seeing with Garf Stevenson. I mean we'll go out and spend 2 to \$300,000 to go around this province to come up with the proper excuse why we can't elect people to our health boards. We'll pay the man \$500 a day.

And that's why, Mr. Speaker, people don't like the process. Once again it has been driven from within Executive Council and it is being forced upon the people of this province. And, Mr. Speaker, that is no reflection at all on the members of that commission who dealt with what they had.

Well, Mr. Speaker, there were alternatives. There were alternatives to depoliticize. And for once and for all, Mr. Speaker, in this province take this process out of the hands of this Legislative Assembly.

Our caucus, our party, put forward a proposal. I'm not saying that it is the right one, that it was the be- and the end-all, but at least it should have been presented to the commission, and the commission could have taken it forward to the people, and the people could have judged.

As you remember, Mr. Speaker, that proposal called for not 58 but 56 members of this House -- 56. And if the government's argument here, which I heard again from the minister, that it was time to cut back on the number of MLAs to save money, that would have even saved more.

But the simple fact is, Mr. Speaker, that that is not the biggest issue. Because we all know that MLAs' remuneration of anything beyond their basic salary is based on the number of people that they represent. And in each and every case the voters didn't disappear. So the riding goes from 10,000 to 17,000; then that means that the travel allowance and the postage and everything else that goes along with being an MLA in this province is going to have to reflect the fact that you now represent more constituents.

So the only saving we're talking about here, Mr. Speaker, are the base salaries of eight MLAs. Well what this government has already spent on a commission, in which they'll spend on this nonsense with Mr. Stevenson running around the province on health care, far outweigh any cost-savings to the taxpayers of this province. A couple of less cabinet ministers, Mr. Speaker, as we all know, would save the taxpayer as much money as what we're talking about with the reduction of eight base salaries. That is fact and reality. That is fact and reality.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think it would have been most appropriate if we could have used our federal boundaries, a jurisdiction outside of the control of any political party in this province, a respected commission and process which every 10 years re-evaluates and split that up so that MLAs and MPs (Member of Parliament) could coordinate and work together and save taxpayers' money. That's what people expected in the 1990s, Mr. Speaker, not this

process that we see being rammed through this House and rammed down the throats of people in this province.

So now, Mr. Speaker, we have the spectre of huge rural ridings, no consideration for natural boundaries, trading areas, very, very difficult to service, and we've got 11 MLAs in both Regina and Saskatoon -- we've got more MLAs than we've got aldermen. People that walk across their ridings in 20 minutes, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it has been upheld time and time and time again in this country that the basis of Canadian Confederation and the ability to access your political representative has been one defined not by narrow population figures, but by all the considerations of this vast land.

And Mr. Speaker, any time it is put to the test it has won. And in the face of that we have an NDP government who said we must decrease the political power of rural Saskatchewan, we must make sure that never again does rural Saskatchewan have the ability to influence public policy in this province. That's basically what they've done over their last two and a half years and that's what they do with this piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker.

It is one of the most clever gerrymanders that I have ever seen take place and it is nothing but that, Mr. Speaker, it is nothing but that. Those are harsh words, but they are reality and they are what people in rural Saskatchewan, particularly, are saying about this government more and more every day, Mr. Speaker, as they realize the circumstance under which they will function. And increasingly, Mr. Speaker, that function is one of a second-class citizen -- a second class citizen. Because they know their ability to access their elected representative is far more difficult than someone living in an urban area.

Mr. Speaker, that simply is unfair. I say it is unconscionable. And it is something that people do not expect of their elected representatives in the 1990s. That was the politics of the '20s and '30s and '40s, but it is not the politics of the 1990s.

Mr. Speaker, saving taxpayers money is a laudable goal; denying taxpayers access to their political representatives is not. And, Mr. Speaker, I think it has been a shame and a sham that we have gone through this process over the last year in this province and not taken this province into the 21st century in the way that we determine electoral representation.

(1445)

Mr. Speaker, in regards to rural Saskatchewan and the appropriateness of people being comfortable with the areas that they represent, I would propose to the Assembly today:

That the words "Wood Mountain" be deleted and the words "Wood River" be substituted therefor in the motion presented by the hon. minister.

And I believe that this is appropriate, given the fact that Wood River is a well-known entity throughout that particular riding, and Wood Mountain is only one community within that riding. And I think, Mr. Speaker, people in that part of Saskatchewan would appreciate the fact that that name change be afforded.

That is seconded by my colleague, the member from Souris-Cannington.

Mr. Boyd: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I too would like to raise some concerns about the changes in the constituency boundaries.

Mr. Speaker, the government is proposing the changes, as we all know, and cutting down on the number of MLAs in Saskatchewan and suggesting that the reason for doing it is to save taxpayers' dollars. And I guess that certainly is a laudable goal, and I think people in Saskatchewan recognize that and believe that that's an important issue, particularly in these days of financial restraint.

However, Mr. Speaker, let's make no mistake about what the real reason behind what they're planning on doing here is. The real reason is to preserve the electoral base of the NDP Party, and that's the only reason that they would do this, Mr. Speaker.

If they thought for one moment increasing the number of constituencies in Saskatchewan was in their best interests, they'd do it and do it in a minute, Mr. Speaker. But they feel that the way to do this and to make people believe that what they're doing is right is to cut down on the number of constituencies and try and convince people that saving money is the motive behind this, Mr. Speaker. But it most certainly isn't.

I think people in Saskatchewan believe far more likely the reason is to protect the NDP's electoral base, Mr. Speaker. They realize that this is a government that does anything and everything to protect their chances in the next election upcoming, probably in the next couple of years, Mr. Speaker. And they realize, the people of Saskatchewan, that by taking away constituencies from rural Saskatchewan and having more constituencies in urban Saskatchewan is the way that NDP believe -- at least believe -- is the way to enhance their electoral chances.

And, Mr. Speaker, we see as well that the government is dividing up the number of constituencies set by the number of residents within that constituency. And one has to wonder, Mr. Speaker, at constituencies in . . . particularly some of them in urban Saskatchewan that are growing quickly; certainly they have a lot of people in them, Mr. Speaker, they have young families and therefore have lots of residents. But that doesn't translate directly to the number of voters, Mr. Speaker.

You look at a constituency like the one I represent, and I think of one of the RMs (rural municipality) within my constituency, the RM of Chesterfield, where the average age is 67 years old, Mr. Speaker. Obviously there isn't too many children running

around that RM in my constituency, Mr. Speaker. And therefore those people have less influence on the government policies and less influence on the government process than a constituency with a high number of young families and children, like Regina North West for example, Mr. Speaker.

And then you have to also start looking at some of the other criteria. They recognize the two constituencies in the North because of the vast distances and the vast travel that's necessary to service one of those constituencies, Mr. Speaker. But somehow or another that same kind of criteria isn't extended to the rest of the province. Somehow it's acceptable for members in the north-west of this province, not including the far north, but the north-west of this province. But that same criteria and same consideration isn't extended to them, Mr. Speaker. And I think that that's wrong.

The constituency of Maple Creek for example, or the new constituency as proposed of Kindersley, are huge ridings, Mr. Speaker. I don't know what the new constituency at Kindersley will have when we look at RM councils but it will probably be in the neighbourhood of 20, something like that.

We'll have I believe, three to four, maybe even five schools boards that we'll have to make representations and talk to on a regular basis. We'll have health boards; we'll be looking at probably two at least, health boards that we'll be dealing with on a regular basis, Mr. Speaker.

And then you compare it to a constituency in one of the major cities where they don't have those kinds of things. And in some cases don't have a single school, don't have a single council to deal with other than the umbrella city council, or don't have a single health board other than the umbrella health board for the entire city to deal with.

Mr. Speaker, those are the kinds of things that we deal with on a regular basis. When we leave here at the end of the day or at the end of the week, some of us, Mr. Speaker, drive in excess of five hours to get home, whereas some members walk out the building, jump on their bicycle and drive home in 10 minutes on a bicycle, or less, Mr. Speaker.

And one has to wonder somehow about the opportunity for rural members particularly, to service their constituency compared to an urban member, Mr. Speaker, who can walk across their constituency, walk across their constituency in 20 minutes.

Well I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, it's difficult to represent a rural constituency. It's not easy. It takes, as I said, some of us four to five hours just to get home from Regina. And then to the furthest corner of my constituency prior to the changes, was about two hours. Now it will be an additional hour to an hour and a half, Mr. Speaker, just to get there.

We can't even make it to some functions on a Friday night because of the distances that we have to look at, Mr. Speaker. We can't even make it to a dinner in

Kindersley at 6 o'clock on a Friday afternoon unless we leave here at 1 o'clock right on the dot, Mr. Speaker.

That's a big, big difference than someone representing the constituency in Regina here, who walks out the door and takes a leisurely stroll home and then has four or five hours before they have to go to a function that evening. And that happens on a regular basis, Mr. Speaker.

It's an interesting thing when you represent a constituency that isn't within the confines of Regina, Mr. Speaker. Some people say to us when we're at home -- and it's interesting what happens -- they'll say to you, well why aren't you in Regina; isn't that where everything's happening? And then the next time you see them they'll say, well why weren't you at the dinner in Kindersley last evening?

Well, Mr. Speaker, you look at a constituency like mine, and I'll tell the people of Saskatchewan the reason for it is because the distances are simply too great. We can't physically move that quickly, to be back and forth and back and forth constantly, as our constituents would like us. But somehow or another the Government of Saskatchewan now believes that constituencies like that should even be bigger -- even be bigger. And they use the unjustified argument of suggesting that the people of Saskatchewan want to cut down on money, Mr. Speaker.

Well I believe they could cut down on the level of expenditures in this province in a whole lot of other ways, Mr. Speaker. Garf Stevenson's \$200,000 alone would cover off a number of ridings in this constituency. That's \$200,000. Another \$200,000 for this other commission that the minister has commissioned to run around the province and find out whether her health care reform is going okay. And another \$500,000, Mr. Speaker, to deal with the question of having the health board elections outside the municipal process.

Nine hundred thousand dollars just in those three things alone that this minister . . . the only reason she wants to hold off on those kinds of things is because she feels her and her party's political hide is on the line, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the elections of health board district people, Mr. Speaker. Nine hundred thousand dollars in three single expenditures that I can think of just off the top of my head, and I could think of probably a whole lot more, given a little time to research them, Mr. Speaker.

Three things, \$900,000; they're suggesting that these changes in MLA boundaries will be something in the order of 900 to \$1 million per year. Same kind of expenditures, Mr. Speaker, same money in one year, and we could find numerous examples of this if the government would like, Mr. Speaker.

Twenty thousand dollars to Jack Messer, and now we're finding out today that he's giving away contracts to his son. One has to wonder about how much that's going to cost the Saskatchewan taxpayer,

Mr. Speaker. The \$107 million SaskPower two years ago made -- last year they made \$87 million -- somehow or another it's acceptable to cream off that kind of money from the Saskatchewan taxpayer; but on the other hand, to have representation, to have people that will hold this government accountable is wrong, Mr. Speaker. And I say to the government, shame on you for that kind of thing, Mr. Speaker. The only reason you're doing it is to try to promote the interests of the NDP Party, and everybody realizes that.

But Mr. Speaker, there's some interesting things will develop out of this. I think the people in Saskatchewan recognize it for what it is -- a gerrymander, Mr. Speaker. And I think they also will be watching with extreme glee, extreme glee, as these NDP back-benchers and front-benchers, for that matter, fight it out for nominations for the NDP. It will be interesting to see the member for Rosetown-Elrose and the member for the current seat of Biggar fighting it out in a nomination.

And, Mr. Speaker, if I was a betting man, and I am from time to time, I'd be betting on the member from Biggar. Because the member from Rosetown-Elrose at the moment, Mr. Speaker, is probably the most disrespected politician in Saskatchewan, in probably the history of Saskatchewan.

And the people that deal with him in the environmental field understand that, understand that, Mr. Speaker, and particularly, and particularly the farmers of Saskatchewan understand that, Mr. Speaker.

That minister is done like dinner and he knows it, Mr. Speaker -- he's done like dinner. He won't last another term and it'll be . . . I will be watching and in fact I think I'm going to make a special trip to Rosetown that night when they have that election.

The Speaker: -- The member may want to do that but I can't see on the contents of the Bill that that has . . . very pertinent to the Bill and I would . . . or to the motion, and I'd ask the member to get back to the motion.

Mr. Boyd: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the changes in the electoral boundaries will result in a lot of interesting battles for the NDP, a lot of interesting battles. And I think that the . . . I would invite probably the whole, entire Conservative caucus to attend that nomination and we'll watch with great joy as that member goes down to defeat by his own party members; own party members will take him out finally, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, and there's other ones shaping up too, as I understand it. There's other nomination battles shaping up all over Saskatchewan. Maybe that . . . maybe in some funny way that's the Premier's way of dealing with some of the incompetent people in your party; maybe that's the motive behind it all, Mr. Speaker. Maybe he realizes that people like the member from Rosetown-Elrose and the gross

incompetence that he shows in here on a daily basis, Mr. Speaker, is the reason why Biggar and Rosetown are combined into the next . . . into a constituency, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this kind of legislation is wrong. They say it's to save money but we all know that's not the case, Mr. Speaker. We all know it's to hopefully enhance the electoral chances of the NDP. The people of rural Saskatchewan aren't being fooled by this, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Supreme Court of Canada a couple of years ago suggested to the people of Canada that population alone should not be the only determinant when setting constituencies in the province of Saskatchewan, when they were referred that piece of legislation back in '91, I believe it was.

And, Mr. Speaker, they were right then and I believe that they would rule the same way today, given the opportunity. They would believe that there's more to representing a constituency than equal numbers of people, Mr. Speaker. The one person, one vote, certainly has a lot of merit, Mr. Speaker, but there's also other things -- to offset the balance of population centres with the more rural areas of a province is important as well. To allow members to have the opportunity to serve those constituents in a good way, Mr. Speaker, is important as well. And this government has overlooked that in their quest for power, Mr. Speaker.

(1500)

Mr. Speaker, we see constituencies with several thousand square miles now that have to be represented by one lone MLA compared to a city of Regina with, what is it going to be, something like 11. There's only, I believe, 7 or 8, 9 maybe it is, council members in all of Regina and they only do it on a part-time basis and are able to service the needs of the city of Regina, but somehow or another it takes 11 MLAs working full time and about three or four cabinet ministers out of Regina to serve the interests of Regina. And I say, Mr. Speaker, that if they believed in fairness in any way, they'd be dealing with those two issues as well, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, unfortunately in the province of Saskatchewan there's other ways that this could have been dealt with. They could have looked into our proposal which was simply to divide up the number of federal constituencies into four so you'd have coterminous boundaries so the people of Saskatchewan would know who represents them in a provincial constituency and would know who represents them in a federal constituency. And you wouldn't have this overlap that you do right now, Mr. Speaker, with people not knowing who is their federal member or who is not, not knowing who their provincial member is, Mr. Speaker.

And it would have further reduced the number of constituencies -- if that was the goal. If the goal was to reduce the number of constituencies to deal with the

financial constraints that the province finds itself under, Mr. Speaker, it would have further reduced the number of constituencies by two, Mr. Speaker.

But somehow or another that doesn't fit the mould for the NDP. When they're dividing up the constituencies and sitting down with the map and drawing all the squiggly lines around the constituencies and finding out where their interests were best served, federal constituencies aren't divided up the best way in their way of looking at it, Mr. Speaker.

The commission did a great job, Mr. Speaker, considering the constraints and the legislation that they were faced with and the legislation that they had to work under, Mr. Speaker. They did a great job. They did it the best they possibly good. But their hands were tied by legislation that was politically motivated, Mr. Speaker, and everyone in Saskatchewan understands that now I believe, Mr. Speaker. And I say to the government members opposite, that they should be ashamed of themselves for the gerrymander that they've put on to the people of Saskatchewan.

And the people of Saskatchewan won't forget it, Mr. Speaker. They won't forget it in the next election. I would say to them, Mr. Speaker, that there'll be member after member in rural and urban Saskatchewan within their caucus that will go down to defeat because of the kinds of things that they are doing. And this is just one more example of the kinds of shameful actions that this government has done.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mrs. Bergman: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak in support of the amended motion regarding the Constituency Boundaries Commission report.

The Leader of the Third Party has spoken in this House previously on the formation of the commission whose result is before us today in the form of a final report.

In her previous remarks she commended the government on taking the initiative to reduce the number of members. I don't think any one of us can justify the cost of 66 elected members for a province of less than 1 million people.

The Act that established the commission contained some reforms which I think reduced partisanship. One of the significant changes involved providing for the nomination of the commission chair by the Chief Justice of Saskatchewan and selection of the other two members in consultation with the leaders of the opposition parties.

In speaking to the legislation that established this commission, the Leader of the Third Party urged the government to give the commission a full mandate to determine the boundaries and to determine the number of seats as well as to develop a process for setting future election dates. But her comments fell on deaf ears. She was told that the government was doing what had always been done, as though that is some justification for action.

Ten months after that debate we have before us the results of the commission's work. Unfortunately the outcome of the commission is flawed because the mandate to do the fullest job possible was missing from the very beginning. The legislation that set up the commission placed serious constraints upon it. These constraints included forcing the commission to find a way of reducing the overall number of seats from 66 to 58. All reductions, by the way, came at the expense of rural Saskatchewan.

Under the formula provided them, they were not to touch the two northern seats of Athabasca and Cumberland. In the process of setting the boundaries, the Act forced the commission to stay within a plus or minus 5 per cent of a constituency population quotient.

The remaining constraint imposed was that the figures on which the constituencies are based, are census population figures rather than voter population. This means some constituencies may have a significant variation in the number of actual voters because of the way our population is dispersed demographically.

Secondly, it means the constituencies are based on small census units or enumeration areas. The commission was, once again, limited because it did not draw boundaries such that they cut these areas apart. These questionable regulations created several difficulties for the commission. Despite these constraints the commission produced good work and I thank and commend the members and staff for their diligence and commitment to their task.

I am pleased to see that the commission incorporated several recommendations that were made to it during its series of public hearings. However, I am disappointed that the government did not offer it a greater chance to serve the Saskatchewan people. Real consultation must involve an element of responsiveness and I believe that the commission's hands were tied to a great extent in terms of how responsive they could be due to the nature of their assignment.

I know that one of the other problems brought to the attention of the commission during their public hearings was with respect to the names of some of the constituencies. In most cases the names are appropriate but in others not enough attention was paid to maintaining some of the historic names or to the names of the centre which dominates the area.

Historic names now gone include Maple Creek and Assiniboia. Maple Creek is in the new constituency of Cypress Hills and Assiniboia is in Wolf Willow or Wood Mountain according to today's motion, or Wood River. While the loss of these traditional names might seem trivial, these are historic names and one must remember that in the case of Assiniboia, for example, that was the name of the original territory which covered all of southern Saskatchewan before this province was ever founded.

Several other problems exist, a number of which have been brought to our attention by individual voters in this province. We have been contacted by individuals who are troubled by the changes that these boundaries will mean for them; communities for example who are isolated from the trading centre in their constituency. These people feel that they have been thrust into a constituency with which they have no natural connections and no intercommunity allegiances. This is not a trivial concern. This is a real concern that affects real people and we should not dismiss it.

In another case, people from the existing constituency of Moosomin have contacted us with their concerns about feeling displaced because for the first time since the province was formed, they have been thrust into a different constituency. These people no longer live in the constituency of Moosomin where they and their families have lived all their lives. In Saskatchewan, where we have such a deep sense of history and tradition, this is not a trivial matter.

Mr. Speaker, we as legislators should be sensitive to these concerns. People have asked us for sensible and practical changes and we should be prepared to give them that as a minimum. The changes requested would have no bearing on the plus and minus 5 per cent variance.

With respect to today's motion, Mr. Speaker, I intend to support it so that the boundaries on which we will campaign in the coming year can be finalized.

On behalf of the Liberal caucus, I want to say that our party is very anxious to take our message and the record of the current government before the people of Saskatchewan. Whether the boundaries are as proposed will make little difference to what we anticipate the outcome to be. In order to expedite that eventuality, Mr. Speaker, this caucus will support today's motion.

Mr. D'Autremont: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To start off with, I'd like to talk a little bit about the amendment proposed by my colleague, the member from Thunder Creek.

His amendment would change the name of what is now the Assiniboia-Gravelbourg constituency along with part of the Shaunavon constituency into the name Wood River. The current proposed name for that constituency is Wolf Willow. And I think perhaps what the problem with the name Wolf Willow is, for the government opposite and particularly for the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, is the wolf part of it perhaps refers to one of that member's potential competitors or challengers for the position of MLA. And perhaps he's somewhat afraid that with the name Wolf Willow for that constituency, it would give his opponent somewhat of an advantage because the constituency would therefore be named after him.

To change the name, as the government has proposed, to Wood Mountain, while it doesn't perhaps reflect the name of any particular person

involved, it does represent the name of one individual community, an individual community amongst a large number of communities.

And, Mr. Speaker, I personally have a problem with that kind of a naming system for a constituency because when you name one particular community you exclude all the others.

If you look at my own constituency, which under the proposed changes will cover a fairly extensive area in south-east Saskatchewan, but if you were to pick the name of one particular community in that area to name that constituency, all of the other communities would feel offended.

The name that the commission has proposed for my new constituency, being Cannington, does represent a village site but it's a village site in which no one lives, Mr. Speaker. Therefore none of the other communities are affected or offended by that. But by naming a constituency after one particular community, you exclude all others.

An Hon. Member: -- Like me.

Mr. D'Autremont: -- Take the constituency of my colleague, the member from Estevan. Certainly it identifies the major centre within that constituency, but what of the centres of Lampman and Torquay and North Portal and Midale? Should not something also identify them? And an appropriate name for that constituency is perhaps Souris, because the Souris River meanders throughout that whole constituency. And you can pick the names of almost any constituency around this province, and if that name identifies one community, then it excludes all of the others.

The amendment proposed by my colleague, the member from Thunder Creek, would change the name from Wolf Willow to Wood River. Wood River crosses that entire constituency. Everyone therefore would know. If you're from Regina you would know that geographically where that constituency resides, and the people of that constituency would not be offended because one community was picked as the name for that constituency. Therefore I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that my colleague's amendment is a good one.

I have no problems with the amendment to the report proposed by the Minister of Health in dealing with the Regina Victoria-University. If the members feel that Regina Victoria better represents the name of that constituency as compared with Regina Victoria Avenue, so be it. I have no problems with that because it's within one single community, the city of Regina.

Mr. Speaker, the whole scenario of the boundary changes has been very political. It has followed a particular political agenda of the government. And when you look at the results of it and how it was done, it's pretty easy to see that that was indeed the case.

Because when the government said that the two

northern ridings were excluded from any considerations because of their particular factors of geography and distance, but that the rest of Saskatchewan was not to be given that consideration, there was a reason for that. And the reason was the fact that those two ridings are held by government members, and have been for some time held by government members. But the rest of Saskatchewan was to be denied that there was some geographic considerations to be given to them.

(1515)

The government proposed -- and the minister talked about it in her address -- one member . . . not one member, one person, one vote. Very good concept, Mr. Speaker, except that's not what they did. That's not what the commission did. That's not how the legislation was drawn up. The legislation was drawn up that you take the census of the area; you take the entire population and subdivide it into 56 ridings across the province.

Well the member from Kindersley suggested that some areas of the province have a high proportion of seniors, and that is indeed the case. And yet other areas of the province have a high number of children. And he mentioned Regina North West. The demographics of Regina North West, Mr. Speaker, are that 20 per cent of the population in that riding currently are under the age of six.

Not one of those children is entitled to vote, nor will they be entitled to vote in the next election or the one after that. And yet they are counted as the total number of people within the constituency, which is 17,000-and-some. So 20 per cent of that, that's approximately 3,400 people, Mr. Speaker, children in that riding.

When you look at the other constituencies, particularly the rural constituencies, you will have a very low number of children in those constituencies. Therefore when you start looking at the numbers of voters, there will be some dramatic differences.

And the government members, while in opposition, protested and complained and fought hard against the idea that there would be differences in numbers of voters. In fact they had a couple of their supporters take the previous government to court and challenge their redistribution in saying that the numbers were too spread out.

Mr. Speaker, in 1982 Senator Gerald Beaudoin considered the possible impact on the democratic rights of people as enshrined in section 3 in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms as it comes to the distribution of constituencies and the number of voters that were placed in each constituency. Those that know Senator Beaudoin know that he is both a law professor and a lawyer, and that he was the former joint chairman of the amending procedures for the Constitution of Canada. Mr. Speaker, this gentleman knows something of which he speaks.

He said it was unfortunate that section 3 of the charter does not refer to equal suffrage, and he was working towards that direction because at the time in the United States the courts had mandated that equal representation for equal number of people be put in place -- what the minister talked of as one person, one vote -- and that he expected our courts would rule in a similar manner at some time.

Senator Beaudoin went on to predict that in the event of the importation of the one person, one vote principle in Canada, that it would be changed and it would be Canadianized to a certain extent under section 1, as resulting from our particular circumstances across Canada when you consider our entire geography east to west and north to south, that we have large urban centres and sparsely, sparsely populated areas.

And the particular situation that he was speaking of was indeed sparse populations and the great distances which make it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to obtain equality between the ridings. And when you look at that consideration across Canada, you see an island of 200,000 people in Prince Edward Island with approximately 120,000 voters having four seats -- four seats, Mr. Speaker. And yet in Toronto, you have 3 million people and a large number of seats, and yet those seats are probably representing 70 to 80,000 voters -- double the number in P.E.I. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the provincial constituencies in Ontario, in Toronto in particular, hold more voters than do the federal ridings in Prince Edward Island.

You look at Yukon with a very small population, Mr. Speaker, and yet they have one MP. And yet the government of the day in Saskatchewan says no, we cannot give any considerations whatsoever to geography and distance in the province of Saskatchewan unless you live in the area of northern Saskatchewan. That is the only area we will give any consideration to.

Mr. Speaker, the friends of the members opposite which took the Saskatchewan government to court in 1991 to strike down Saskatchewan's electoral map led to a decision by that court that indeed the electoral boundaries of that day were improper because of the differences in the numbers of voters. The province appealed that to the Supreme Court and, Mr. Speaker, we all know the outcome of that. The Supreme Court upheld Saskatchewan's electoral boundaries and the electoral boundary map, concluding that what Beaudoin had called Canada's particular situation required the interpretation of section 3, right to vote, which comprehended effective representation.

And that's the same issue we're dealing with today. It's the same issue which the Boundaries Commission was not allowed to deal with; the same issue, Mr. Speaker, that was considered by the Supreme Court a couple of years ago.

There were a large number of interveners in that court case before the Supreme Court, and those interveners, Mr. Speaker, included the Government of Canada,

five provinces, two territories, and two cities. And the court's decision in the question of one person, one vote, and the differences in different constituencies was a six to three decision on June 1, 1991. And the courts upheld the proposed changes to Saskatchewan boundaries for the following reasons.

The question before the court, as stated by the majority, was to what extent, if at all, does the right to vote enshrined in the charter permit deviation from the one person, one vote rule? And two differing views on this question were presented to the court.

According to the first view, equality of voting power was the right protected in section 3 of the charter, and deviations from the state of equality should be minimal. According to the second point of view, effective representation was the protected right and equality of voting power was but one consideration among several.

The second view became the court's view, Mr. Speaker. The purpose of the right to vote enshrined in section 3 of the charter is not equality of voting power *per se*, but the right to effective representation. One of the Supreme Court, Justice McLachlin, reiterated the positions she had taken that the strict principle of one person, one vote, was neither appropriate for Canada nor part of its experience. And there was no evidence that the framers of the charter had contemplated the reading of such a principle into the provisions of that document.

Mr. Speaker, the numbers were the weak side of the case against the Saskatchewan electoral map. The fact that there was a difference between different constituencies was the weakest part of the argument. The Supreme Court not only condoned the distinction between rural and urban electors, which was reflected in the outcome, but the Supreme Court also underwrote that distinction by treating as fact the proposition that rural constituencies are more difficult to represent than urban ones. That's what the court decided, Mr. Speaker.

And when you take into consideration the differences between rural and urban constituencies, no one can deny that it is more difficult to represent a rural constituency. I had the occasion to discuss electoral boundaries with the member from Regina Lake Centre, and she stated at that time that she could walk across her constituency in two hours.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I can't drive across my constituency in two hours, let alone stop and talk to anyone. And, Mr. Speaker, under these proposals, should I be fortunate enough to win re-election, it's going to take me even significantly longer to drive across my constituency, whereas the member from Regina Lake Centre's riding will not have changed dramatically. Mr. Speaker, if I was to attempt to walk across my constituency, I would have to spend a number of weeks doing so.

Mr. Speaker, it's not only just the geographic distances that must be travelled in a rural constituency, it is also

the number of communities and other governmental jurisdictions that one deals with. I currently have two school boards within my constituency, and under the proposed changes I will have two more.

I have health board districts -- 20-some communities, Mr. Speaker, and that will grow. I'll probably have in the neighbourhood of 25 to 30 communities, whereas the members from Regina and Saskatoon deal with one town council -- one city council, rather than a town council; they'll deal with one school board, perhaps two with a separate school board, and let's not forget the possibilities of a third, French school board, because I'll have one of those in my constituency, Mr. Speaker.

And yet when you deal with all of these separate and varied jurisdictions, the members from an urban setting do not have that. And while it's not that difficult to deal with them on an individual basis, Mr. Speaker, it does take a significant amount of time to travel around to visit all of the communities to deal with those different problems in jurisdictions that are involved.

One of the other items that happens with the larger, expanded boundaries in rural constituencies is we now have to deal with more reserves, more first nations. And again it's a challenging experience and an enjoyable one to work with our native friends, Mr. Speaker, but when you're looking at a rural riding as compared to an urban riding, that difficulty is not there.

Mr. Speaker, this government has said that there is no need for a strong voice from rural Saskatchewan, but that we won't touch the northern ridings. They are sacrosanct and must be maintained, as they are under the legislation. But yet the rural constituencies were not given that same consideration. And, Mr. Speaker, that is suspect.

Because what's the reason for that? Why were the two northern ridings so special that they could not be considered? Well, Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, it's because those two constituencies are represented by government members. And when the government made their appointments of the commissioners, they set out the guidelines so stringently that those members' hands were tied and were not permitted to make any variations.

Let's take a look at the proposal that was made by the member from Thunder Creek in his amendment to the legislation that was proposed, that we deal with the 14 federal ridings and subdivide them four ways, four equal ways, to make the ridings. It would have taken the boundaries, the commission, the setting of those boundaries, out of the hands of the provincial government because those boundaries are set federally; so it would have limited any possibilities of gerrymandering by the provincial government.

If you simply divide them four equal ways, then the variance of 5 per cent would have been met. But that did not appeal to the members opposite because they

could not control the process.

The federal government, in the normal course of events, redistributes the federal ridings approximately every 10 years after the census. And yet the legislation as proposed by the government would do that every five years. So we're doubling the number of times redistribution will happen -- Saskatchewan bears the entire cost -- whereas if we used the federal ridings, they would cover their cost and we would simply impose over top of their decisions the provincial constituency boundaries.

And it would have eliminated two more MLAs, Mr. Speaker. But those eliminations would have taken place equally within rural and urban Saskatchewan, rather than simply being cut out of rural Saskatchewan.

(1530)

In fact, Mr. Speaker, the **Leader-Post** had some interesting comments on our proposal, and I would like to quote from them:

The PCs' proposal of taking the existing federal boundaries and dividing each into four provincial ridings is even better than what the NDP legislation proposes, for a few reasons.

One, it pares the Assembly down to 56 seats from the 58 MLAs proposed in the Bill. Two, it could enhance federal-provincial cooperation by establishing a regional basis, and it could result in all of the ridings coming surprisingly close to the plus or minus 5 per cent variance the NDP Bill proposes. Eliminating the inherent unfairness of two special northern seats where votes are worth twice what they are in the South, is the real genius of the Tory proposal.

End of quote.

And that's from the **Leader-Post** of May 22, 1993.

Mr. Speaker, this was but one article which supported the proposal as put forward by this caucus. And the people, Mr. Speaker, also seem to be in favour of it. So it's difficult to understand on a logical basis why the members opposite would reject it.

On a political basis it's entirely understandable why they would have rejected it. A quote, Mr. Speaker, from the **Star-Phoenix** of May 25, 1993, and I quote:

The legislative opposition has detected the aroma of fish. For the government to stubbornly stick to the magic 58 after admitting it chose the number more or less at random, would serve only to convince the real people that the opposition is right and something fishy is indeed going on.

Mr. Speaker, the people recognize what the government opposite is doing, that they are simply gerrymandering the entire electoral boundary

process. When questioned, the Minister of Justice, where did he get the number 58, why was the number 58 chosen, he just reached up and said, I grabbed it out of the air. And he picked it for no particular reason other than for some reason he liked the number 58.

Well, Mr. Speaker, he had already done his numbers; he had already looked at how the population of Saskatchewan was spread, where the children were, where the seniors were, and what would be to the best advantage of the NDP opposite. And that's why the number 58 was chosen, and for no other reason, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, and because he chose the number 58, the boundary commission had no choice to choose any other number. They were forced, they were bound by legislation. And while the minister opposite may break the legislation, the boundary commission cannot do so.

Mr. Speaker, I would urge the members opposite to reconsider what they are proposing with this legislation. I would urge them to be fair, to be fair to all of Saskatchewan, to rural Saskatchewan, instead of doing what is best politically for the NDP. Consider, Mr. Speaker, what is best representation for all of Saskatchewan people, not just what political capital the government opposite can contain.

For that reason, I will be supporting my colleague's amendment and I will be opposing the main motion as presented by the Minister of Health.

Amendment agreed to.

The division bells rang from 3:35 p.m. until 3:45 p.m.

Motion as amended agreed to on the following recorded division.

Yeas

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| Romanow | Calvert |
| Van Mulligen | Renaud |
| Thompson | Murray |
| Wiens | Hamilton |
| Simard | Trew |
| Tchorzewski | Whitmore |
| Lingenfelter | Sonntag |
| Shillington | Roy |
| Anguish | Cline |
| Teichrob | Scott |
| Kowalsky | Crofford |
| Carson | Wormsbecker |
| MacKinnon | Stanger |
| Penner | Knezacek |
| Cunningham | Harper |
| Upshall | Jess |
| Hagel | Langford |
| Koenker | McPherson |
| Lyons | Bergman |
| Lautermilch | |

Nays

- | | |
|---------|-------------|
| Swenson | Britton |
| Devine | D'Autremont |

Boyd
Toth

Goohsen

-- 7

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Canada-United States Trade Dispute

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at the end of my remarks I intend to move a motion:

That this Assembly strongly urge the federal Minister of Agriculture, at his upcoming meetings at Marrakech with his U.S. counterpart, to vigorously defend Canadian interests against U.S. threats to restrict Canadian exports of wheat and durum and ensure that there is an early and appropriate resolution to this serious trade dispute.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to give the Assembly a little bit of background and explanation of the serious problem that Saskatchewan farmers are facing. We're into an international wheat war with the United States, and this is a very serious situation for Saskatchewan farmers who depend very heavily on the export into world markets of our wheat and other commodities.

This is the result of actions by the Americans which we feel is unfair and unjustified. We have in this country a free trade agreement which, with all its warts and shortcomings, has been signed. This agreement is to allow for free movement of commodities back and forth across the border between us and the United States.

Since the signing of the deal Canadians have lived up to their side of the arrangement. We have allowed access and lived up to our side of the agreement. On the other hand, the Americans have not complied with the agreement, with the spirit of the agreement. They continue to use their export enhancement program to subsidize commodities worldwide in our markets, which is strictly in contravention of the agreement, and they refuse to allow access of our commodities into their markets.

We've had many disputes with hogs and softwood lumber and wheat and other commodities, and when we have fair hearings at panels, we seem to always win, because there is no substantiation for the claims that they make. However they continue to harass us, and this is creating great problems for our producers.

And just to explain the background on the wheat situation, we're having large exports of Canadian wheat into the United States this year. That is as a result of a number of factors, partly because of flooding that occurred in the United States. But the main reason for us being able to ship wheat into the United States is that they have exported their wheat into the world markets at hugely subsidized prices.

And they have used their export enhancement program to subsidize durum to the tune of \$60 a ton into traditional Canadian markets; have driven the world price of wheat down dramatically with their subsidies; and at the same time they've created a shortage at home.

The Canadian Wheat Board tells us that the Americans produced approximately enough durum for their own use this year, but because of the extensive subsidized exports, they've created a shortage at home. That has increased the price and Canada has taken advantage of that to back-fill that market. And now we are being shut out of that market . . . or the Americans are attempting to shut us out of that market.

Essentially what's happening is they're setting up a two-price system for wheat in the United States. We had a two-price system for wheat in Canada that we were able to sell our wheat on the domestic market for a higher price than the world market, and that money was then returned to Canadian farmers and was of benefit to Canadian farmers.

But we signed the Free Trade Agreement. The first thing we did was did away with our two-price wheat system. They said two-price wheat is a trade restriction, and by the agreement, you're not allowed to have a two-price wheat system. So we immediately, like good people, did away with our two-price wheat system.

Now the Americans are in effect having a two-price system. They've got one price, a very subsidized price in world markets, and a high domestic price. And they are attempting to maintain that at the expense of Canadian farmers and keep us out of that market. So while we have complied with the agreement and the spirit of the agreement, they have not complied with it. And that is creating huge problems for our farmers.

The provincial government have been in contact with the federal government and urged them to stand up to the Americans, to take strong action. Many people say, well they're twice as big or they're 10 times as big, and therefore there's nothing you can do and we should just concede and roll over and play dead.

We think that at some point we have to draw the line in the sand and stand up for our rights and make the Americans walk the walk instead of talking the talk. And we have many concerns and we certainly have been in contact with the federal government, with the Prime Minister, and with the federal Minister of Agriculture at a recent provincial and federal Agriculture ministers' meeting. All the provincial ministers urged the federal minister to take a strong stand and to stand up to the Americans. And we continue to urge them to do that.

Part of the attack that Americans are making is on our marketing system, on our Canadian Wheat Board. Their argument that our wheat is subsidized is not substantiated. All the figures would show that American wheat is subsidized at a greater rate than

Canadian wheat is, and much of what occurs is a problem that they seem to have with our marketing system, claiming Canadian Wheat Board to be a subsidy.

We have had numerous audits which show this not to be the case; that this is simply cooperation between farmers trying to get the best price in the world market for their grain. It is not a penny of government money going into farmers; it is farmers working together to market the grain. It is not a subsidy, and that is being undermined by the American action.

So, Mr. Speaker, we continue to call on them not to trade off Saskatchewan farmers particularly. There are a number of trade disputes on the table, including sugar and peanut butter and a number of other items. And certainly we do not in Saskatchewan in any way want to trade off the commodities that we produce, such as wheat, for other commodities. And we urge the federal government to do that.

We certainly do not want a cap on our production. Although we are selling record amounts of wheat this year, caps might not seem that dangerous that we'll probably drop back to lower levels. But if we allow the Americans to maintain a two-price system and subsidize wheat in the world markets and not have access to back-fill their markets, we certainly stand the risk of having our producers only one market to sell in, and that market being a very poor global market that's been depressed by American wheat.

So we had a lot of rhetoric from Mr. Chrétien during the election campaign, that he was going to renegotiate NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement), that he was going to stand up to the Americans. And so far we've heard very little. It sounds very much like the old Mulroney singing: when Irish eyes are shining. We haven't had the strong response after the election that we had the talk of before the election.

So we strongly urge the members of this Assembly to support this motion to send a message on behalf of Saskatchewan farmers to Ottawa -- that we will not be betrayed, that we are fair traders, that we are competitive, and that the Americans need to know that if there's going to be free trade, it must work both ways.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would make the motion, seconded by the member for Swift Current:

That this Assembly strongly urge the federal Minister of Agriculture, at his upcoming meeting in Marrakech with his U.S. counterpart, to vigorously defend Canadian interests against U.S. threats to restrict Canadian exports of wheat and durum and to ensure that there is an early and appropriate resolution to this serious trade dispute.

Mrs. Teichrob: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm very pleased to have the opportunity to rise and speak in support of the motion before the

House at this time.

As we know, at this time the federal Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Goodale, is attending meetings in Morocco with his American counterpart Mike Espy, and they're about to sign the GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) trade agreement which will establish the parameters, define the parameters for world trade for a long time to come, ending the Uruguay round which has been in process for a number of years now.

The provisions that are made in the agreements that are enshrined in that document, the documents that they will sign, will affect trade and the prosperity of Canada very fundamentally. And I do want to support the minister in his call for the federal minister to take a very tough stand in terms of protecting Canadian interests.

I want to refer to a phone-in program that was on the CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation), an extended phone-in on the noon hour a couple of days ago. And I wasn't able to listen to all of it but there were stations linked from Minot, North Dakota, Montana, and Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. And I was concerned about some of the American callers in particular who seemed to be very misinformed.

And I think that's one of the important roles that government can play in agriculture, is in making sure that farmers have accurate information; that people at the federal levels and people who are interacting with trading partners at international levels convey the appropriate market signals to producers of all agriculture commodities. And with the correct information in hand, farmers will make the right decisions.

So when you hear producers at the grass roots level phoning in to public broadcasts and saying things which indicate that they're grossly misinformed is really worrisome. They said things like, the American farmers said things like, they described the flow of durum into the U.S. (United States) from Canada as being, in their words, an avalanche, a deluge, and so on. Where actually the figures that I have here, which are -- the source is the Canadian Grain Commission -
 _ there has been an increase in durum for some of the reasons spelled out by the minister, where the U.S. has used their export enhancement program to sell their durum abroad, and the Canadian exports are required by their milling and pasta industry now to back-fill that void. But at the same time, barley exports to the U.S. have dropped considerably.

(1600)

And I want to quote from . . . And these are American numbers, so Americans wouldn't be able to dispute these. This comes from a paper prepared by the agricultural economics department of the North Dakota State University. And they say that, for instance:

Canada is the leading importer of U.S. bakery products, with a 68 per cent share of U.S. bakery exports in 1983 and a 65 per cent share in 1991. U.S. exports to Canada grew 162 per cent, from 25,000 million tons in 1983 to 66 million tons in 1991.

Breakfast cereals is the second most important category of wheat exports, accounting for 33 per cent of the quantity and 33 per cent of the value of exports in 1991. The largest importer of U.S. breakfast cereals was Canada. U.S. exports to Canada increased 410 per cent over this time period (that's '83 to '91) with Canada's share of U.S. exports increasing from 33 to 42 per cent.

Pasta exports from the U.S. to Canada grew from 10,000 million tons in 1983 to 30,000 in 1991 -- a 190 per cent increase. Canada was the only country with a significant growth in demand for U.S. pasta products.

And remember, here we're not talking about raw commodities. We're talking about value added products which result in a high number of jobs and economic activity in the United States.

Snack food was another interesting one where a volume of 13,000 was exported in 1991 from the United States to Canada, and it accounted for 49 per cent of U.S. exports in 1991. It's an enormous percentage growth.

There are of course, as they suggest here, several aggregate trade and agricultural policies that impact product trade, not the least of which is the pending -- well not pending now -- but NAFTA, which was initiated of course by the Mulroney government and has been formalized and completed by the federal Liberals. The U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement of course reduced tariffs on products from 10 per cent over a five-year period, which is another factor for the increased exports from the U.S. to Canada.

And more importantly, before 1989 Canada operated, as the minister referred to, under a two-price wheat system on wheat. So during much of that time during the 1980s, Canadian domestic wheat prices exceeded those in the United States, thereby increasing ingredient costs for Canadian food manufacturers.

So now that there's a North American wheat price defined in relation to the Minneapolis Grain Exchange price, it lowers the cost of raw materials to Canadian food manufacturers and should eliminate that source of competition. Of course the exchange rate on currency, the fluctuations in that rate impact dramatically.

They summarize, Mr. Speaker, in this paper by talking about the changes in the market-place and referring to the enormous increases in value added grain products. The flow from the United States to Canada has really increased dramatically.

As we know that there are . . . That kind of facts never came out. The people that phoned the radio program . . . the American producers didn't seem to be at all aware. They seemed to feel it's completely a one-way street with Canadian products flowing into the U.S. And I think it's important, if the American authorities don't want to take the responsibility for making sure that their farmers are well-informed, then we should make sure that our farmers are well-informed and that they know the truth and that there is some rationale for the kind of movement that's happening.

Quite a bit of the grain, we're told by the Wheat Board right now, that is moving from Canada into the U.S., is as a result of the flooding earlier this year in the U.S. Midwest where their corn and soy bean crops were severely affected. So a great deal of the grain that's moving in outside of durum -- Canadian grain that's moving in -- is low-grade feed wheat destined, with an end-user's certificate, to feed lots in California, Arizona and Texas. And it's going in there to fill a real need that was created by some anomalies in the weather. And I submit that that's a normal and desirable type of movement to have, and that if we had a similar disaster in this country that we would certainly want to be able to replace the lost production to keep our livestock industry going.

So I think in all ways that it can be demonstrated that we are fair, that the U.S. is crying foul on a very shaky basis and that they should, they should really attempt, in spite of all their talk about being free traders, they should attempt to realistically and objectively look at those movements and accept that, if we are to live in a freer trade environment, that it has to be a two-way street, Mr. Speaker. That is what we call a level playing-field.

And I think it's important to address competitiveness. I want to quote from an article written by an economist, Paul Krugman from MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) -- again another American institution -- and the article is entitled: Competitiveness: A Dangerous Obsession, and he talks about the difference between competitiveness and comparative advantage. And I think that is a very important element when we're talking about a level playing-field, is that there are commodities in which countries and regions have a natural advantage.

For instance, we're not about to start growing oranges here. We do have an advantage in some areas, for instance in terms of weather, in terms of the ingenuity of scientists to come up with improved plant breeding. We have a number of other advantages that are . . . well for instance in swine breeding, for example, where we have a quality product that's in demand in different parts of the world because of superior genetics, so there are different ways of having an advantage.

But a competitive advantage -- those are comparative advantages -- but the competitive advantage that is achieved through artificial means, whether political or economic or subsidized movement, that kind of a competitive advantage only leads to a downward

spiral where people are bashing their brains out in idiotic trade wars, lowering the income levels on both sides of the war, and creating lower standards of living, reducing margins, and in the end benefiting no one.

An Hon. Member: -- Farmers get hurt.

Mrs. Teichrob: -- And my colleague says, farmers get hurt. And they do. And the interesting thing is that a lot of people look at farmers or talk about farmers as being at the bottom of that totem pole. And they are not; they are right in the middle.

When farmers hurt and they can't afford to invest in the inputs they should have, then fertilizer dealers, fuel dealers, livestock feed manufacturers, and all of those industries that put input into the agricultural-producing community are hurt as well. So the farmer is not on the bottom of that totem pole. He's right in the middle. And when he hurts so does a very large part of our economy that's related to agricultural inputs.

And Mr. Krugman says at the end, in his conclusion, he says:

. . . the focus on the supposedly competitive nature of international economic relations greases the rails for those who want confrontational if not frankly protectionist policies.

And this is an American economist talking about and being critical, highly critical, about the U.S. approach to trade issues with their trading partners in the world, including Canada.

And I can't help but wonder recently, in the course of events, where the Liberals have been -- the provincial Liberals, the third party in Saskatchewan who has now, I hope . . . particularly since our minister supplied them with the telephone number of Ralph Goodale today so that they might communicate with him -- where they have been on any of these issues. We have the issue of the termination of the North Dakota check-off rebate on wheat and durum imports from Canada. A small thing economically, but having, I think, a political posturing but raising the profile again of Canadian trade into the U.S. And this happened recently. There was no comment from them.

There are hearings in Montana state on the impact of Montana's transportation system -- the road and rail -- of increasing Canadian grain exports to the United States. We haven't heard the Liberals in Saskatchewan mention anything about the impact or the input of Saskatchewan farmers on that issue.

In January when the Montana farmers blockaded elevators against Canadian producers, we didn't hear the federal minister or the provincial Liberals, who talk about supporting Saskatchewan farmers, on trade issues. But when there is an issue that we should be speaking out on, we speak; the Liberals are silent and

they say nothing about whether they've communicated with the federal minister, because it is his jurisdiction. And surely they should have that pipeline, be using it, and keeping it open in the interests of Canadian farmers and Saskatchewan farmers.

We certainly wish Mr. Goodale well in the critical negotiations that are taking place right now. But Canada is an exporting nation; we do a good job; we have quality products. And we hope that he will not back down, not take a back seat to any of the other signatories to that agreement which has . . . it will have such a vital impact on the future of the agricultural industry in this province.

And I think that it would be positive if the Liberal opposition in Saskatchewan would make their positions publicly known on these issues, would talk about the issues and not leave us with the impression that the emperor, being our federal Minister of Agriculture over in Marrakech, has no clothes. We want to make sure that he defends the interests of Saskatchewan and Canadian producers of all agricultural commodities very, very strongly.

So I think with that, Mr. Speaker, I just want to close by saying that we need to have a balanced approach. We have a very diverse production base in Canada and in Saskatchewan. We have a growing explosion in diversification, a huge number of growing opportunities for value added and further processing and exporting and trading in those goods and products in which we truly do have a comparative advantage.

And I think that it's important at all levels of government and industry that we make that known and that we support and defend our position in world markets as vigorously as possible. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1615)

Mrs. Bergman: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member has made a motion urging the federal government to defend Canadian interests -- indeed, Saskatchewan interests -- in the export of our grain. I enthusiastically support the idea of this motion. And upon the conclusion of my remarks, I will pose an amendment that underscores my support to this motion.

We support cooperative, coordinated efforts to stabilize and improve Canadian grain exports. We want this government to vigorously support the federal government's efforts in agriculture. I believe that this desire to seek out opportunities to be positive and cooperative should be the driving force in all of our efforts. We believe that every member should evaluate all issues and policies on the basis of their value to the people of Saskatchewan. We should work together to improve this province, not bicker or rant and rave to score Brownie points.

In his motion the hon. member urges the federal Agriculture minister to vigorously defend Canadian interests. Obviously Ralph Goodale would not travel all the way to Marrakech unless the minister was unquestionably committed to defending Canadian interests. It is clear that the western grain exports are a top priority to the minister. In spite of a heavy schedule, handling all of Canada's agricultural issues, he is unreservedly willing to go halfway around the world to meet face to face with one person who can resolve the issue. There is no question that the federal minister is committed to defending our interests internationally.

Mr. Speaker, the federal Minister of Agriculture deserves the open support of all the members of this House and all the producers across the province. His efforts cannot be made easier by the vast variety of demands on his time, the complexity of all of Canada's agricultural issues, and the volume of work to be done. In spite of all these things he has shown great tenacity and conviction in an extremely difficult task.

Therefore I move, seconded by the member from Shaunavon:

That we remove all the words after "Assembly" and replace them with the following:

commend the federal Minister of Agriculture for his actions to date to strengthen Canadian agriculture -- through such initiatives as renewed vigour in the GATT talks, developing new international markets for food products, and pursuing a new, whole-farm income stabilization program -- and commend his actions to date to defend Canadian interests against U.S threats to restrict Canadian exports of wheat and durum, and ensure, in his upcoming meeting in Marrakech with his U.S counterpart, that there is an early and appropriate resolution to this serious trade dispute.

I so move.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goohsen: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's certainly a challenge to enter into the debate on this motion, Mr. Speaker, because of course we have before us an issue that is so critically important to all of Saskatchewan.

The particular things that happen individually to the durum markets, wheat markets, and our barley markets, may not affect a lot of folks in the city right away, but eventually the spin-off effects will affect everyone in our province. If we lose the ability to market a large part of our export product, certainly the lack of cash flow that that will create will be of significant consequence to all people in our province.

And so noting that, it should not be a surprise that on

this very rare occasion we will join and support the government in their general principle of what they are attempting to accomplish here. We will always, of course, have some parts of the issue that we would want to debate and discuss and perhaps even disagree with, but the general principle we do have to support.

And it would obviously be against the best interests of Saskatchewan farmers and Saskatchewan people for us to argue too significantly against the amendment either. Although I think it's a red herring that is not necessary. The fundamental principle at stake is the more important part of what we're talking about today.

That fundamental principle, of course, has to be the right of our Saskatchewan and Canadian farmers to be able to export their products into the world in the atmosphere of the Free Trade Agreement that we talked about and discussed and went through a federal election on as a main campaign issue back in the '80s. All of those things were considered and talked about, and the necessity for that trade to go on in order for the world to continue to function in a better way.

And the voters of this country voted for the government that was in favour of free trade because they believed at that time it would be better for us as Canadian citizens. And now we see our trading partners reneging on their part of that agreement. We see them attempting to take advantage of those parts of the agreement that suit them, and they then want to stop those parts of the agreement that are not quite so nice for them that would benefit us. And that is poor sportsmanship, to put it mildly.

And the Americans are of course the brunt of this issue at the moment, but the whole problem wasn't just caused by the Americans. The problem has to go back -- and we need to include all of the players in this discussion -- the problem goes back to the Europeans dumping their products on the world market to begin with, which caused the frustration and infuriation of the American administration, and as a result they decided to enter into a trade war with Europe in the food markets.

We as Canadians, and particularly we as Saskatchewan farmers, have suffered as a result of that trade war to a point that can never be measured in dollars, and certainly could never be measured in the human misery that it has caused for many of the families especially in rural Saskatchewan, and that spin-off effect to all of society, that we have seen. We have seen a devastation of rural Saskatchewan as a result of that trade war simply because we've watched the sky fall in on many people.

Yesterday I heard a minister allude to Chicken Little and the fact that we were crying about the sky falling in and that it was a laughable kind of a fairy tale joke. It's no joke, Mr. Speaker, if you're the farmer who's losing your farm. And it's no joke if you're the businessman who's going into receivership. It's no joke if your family is a part of one of those families or

businesses that is economically destroyed as a result of the policies of the world around us.

The free traders of this country and the free traders of North America have got to learn flat out for sure that this is a deal that's got to run both ways. And we do have to support the Minister of Agriculture in his bid to enforce that message to the Americans, the Europeans, and the rest of the world. We cannot allow a free trade agreement to be one-sided. That's why we made an agreement, so that things could flow both ways.

And so I'm saying to the Minister of Agriculture, go for it; do your thing; do the best you can. But let's take it a step further. There are some things here that need to be dealt with that you might as well challenge right away, as you're at it.

We've got the barley issue as well as the durum issue. Why do we have the Canadian Wheat Board stopping the farmers along the Saskatchewan border from shipping feed barley into the feed lots of the United States of America where they could sell it themselves at a huge profit, compared to the restrictions that we have with the Canadian Wheat Board?

I've heard the argument, Mr. Speaker, that we can't do that because then we would somehow upset the barley growers up North in northern Saskatchewan because they would be restricted to selling it to the domestic market because of the travelling distances and all that.

That is not a fact and it's not true, Mr. Speaker. The fact of the matter is that if the southern farmers were allowed to ship their barley into Montana and the other states where the big feed lots are, that would loosen up the market for the rest of the producers in the province. That would mean less competition for them up North because that barley would be gone; it would be out of the country. And those people that sell malt barley to the Biggar malt plant would then have an exclusive market for their product. It would help everybody if we allowed that to happen.

So, Minister of Agriculture, we say to you today, take your battle to the federal government, take your battle to the world and do it well, but let's do it all. Let's free up this Canadian Wheat Board so that people can sell barley in this country. Let's free up our borders so that we can truly have international trade on an open basis for all people concerned.

There's no use stopping half way on this thing. If we're going to get started on it, let's roll and let's go for it all. Let's have a deal where we can all prosper and let's get these grain prices back up where they should be. Let's open up the markets for the Saskatchewan farmers.

We've talked about the flooding in the States and some of the causes of some of our present problems. And it's true, Mr. Speaker, that that happened; there was a great flood in the United States last year. It's true that out of the goodness of our hearts -- and some business interests, I expect, as well -- that an awful lot

of our grain cars went into the United States over the past year to try to help the Americans to get their grain products moved around the country because their water system wasn't workable. Quite a fact of life.

I was fortunate enough to fly over some of the Mississippi River valley last year, and true enough, there was water all over. And you can understand the frustrations and the terrible losses that the people in that area suffered.

The Speaker: -- Why is the member on her feet?

Hon. Ms. Carson: -- With leave, Mr. Speaker, to introduce guests.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Ms. Carson: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly this afternoon, some very important people from my constituency in the city of Melfort. They are in attending meetings with the credit union. And we have in the gallery, Harvey Heavin and Joanne Forer and Bruce Bassett and Ralph Wagman, Bob Stewart, Neil Morton, Joanne Forer, Bob Kirkland.

And I would like . . . did I say David Bonli? I would like all members of the Assembly to welcome them to Regina and to the House this afternoon.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Canada-United States Trade Dispute (continued)

Mr. Goohsen: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we continue to debate the motion by the Minister of Agriculture, I too hope that the visitors will enjoy their stay and that they will realize how serious the issue is before us here today.

What we're talking about today is the need to open up our borders to the United States without restriction and the need for our federal government to go into these negotiations on our behalf in a very strong and supported way. We want them to know that we're behind them.

The Minister of Agriculture has shown his desire to show that support. Members of the opposition Liberal Party have spoken, and they've shown their support. And we of course are lending our support as well. So everybody, for a change, is united in at least the principle at stake.

We would argue, as I have mentioned, on some of the details and how far we should go or shouldn't go, but we wouldn't argue on the principle, which is that we have to solve this problem in the interests of Saskatchewan farmers and society as a whole.

There is absolutely no question that if we restrict the movement of our grains, or have for some reason those movements restricted by the Americans, no matter how it happens, if it's by agreement or by force or whatever, if that happens or if we have tariffs imposed against us or retaliations are taken -- no matter what happens in that whole area, we are all going to be the losers in the province of Saskatchewan, especially because we are this land-locked province where the exports of our food products are absolutely crucial to our trade balances and our ability to form a tax base, a job base, and a province of prosperity.

Most of the things that we enjoy in life are dependent upon our exports, and that happens to be a fact of life right now to a large extent, those exports to the United States, because they have become our most important and largest trading partner.

The details of why that has happened, the minister has alluded to. The fact that they've had short crops and big floods in the United States are a fact of life. The fact that the Americans had committed themselves to selling vast volumes of grain before the crops were even seeded, and the fact that they had entered into those contracts that they were not able to deliver on without shorting their own domestic pool of grain for their own use -- that is bad management on their part and certainly they should pay the price and not be asking Saskatchewan farmers to pay the price for them.

(1630)

They oversold their markets, they oversold the amount of grains they had, and they did it through a subsidy program that we even find bigger fault with. But they exported all of this grain because they were committed to do it and they had to back-fill that grain in order to feed their own people. Where were they going to get it? They came to Canada and bought it from us. And we willingly sold it to them because it was a good price.

Now they want to say to us, oh you guys did something wrong here. Well we didn't do anything wrong, Mr. Speaker. The Americans that made the deals to sell the grain that they didn't have, they made the mistake. And it's not our fault and they ought not to try to penalize us for the fact that they're running a two-price system in the grain markets and in the world markets. They ought to be looking at themselves.

I want to mention too that we hear people talk about two-price systems in Canada. And I say just as we couldn't have that "eat your cake and have it" sort of a situation in Canada for ourselves, neither should the Americans be able to have that for themselves. They shouldn't have anything more for themselves than what we've got for ourselves.

If we can't have two-price systems because it interfered with world trade and all those things and they took it away from us and gave us all those

arguments, fine and dandy. Then the Americans should play by the same rules.

So today we're on the same side with the Minister of Agriculture. We think the Americans are being unfair. We know that their farmers are in trouble, and for that I sympathize with them, because certainly they are. I've talked to them; I've visited with them. They've got some serious financial problems in the United States with their farming community. No question about it.

But that's not the fault of the Canadian farmers and it's not the fault of Saskatchewan as a province. They did it to themselves and they ought to be brave enough to stand up and admit that to the world and take their lumps in this case.

They need our grain. If they don't ship our durum wheat in from Saskatchewan into the United States to back-fill the vacuum that they need to feed their own people, that wheat will be shipped to Italy under a contract by the Canadian Wheat Board or anybody else that can do it, and the Americans will buy it from the Italians and ship it right straight back to New York because their people need the wheat. They've got to have it.

So I don't care what they do. They're going to back-fill it from some place. So why penalize us? And the Minister of Agriculture should carry that message to the minister of the Canadian agriculture organization, Mr. Goodale, and put it to him straight and blunt and right out front, that we are united in a coalition of politicians of every stripe in this province in support of the Saskatchewan farmer and the ability not only of to ship durum wheats and wheats into the United States freely under a Free Trade Agreement, but also to include the sales of barley and other oilseeds and all those other things.

What should we do if they don't capitulate? We'd better talk a little bit about how we're going to run this bluff, because if we're going to run a bluff -- and that may be what it is -- then we'd better be willing to put up because it's going to maybe get miserable. It might get tough here.

And I'm telling you folks, we might have to shut the gas valves off into the United States. Maybe we'll have to play hardball here. Maybe we'll have to shut off a few of the things they can't live without. Maybe they can live without our durum wheat, but they can't live without our gas, and they can't live without our coal, and they can't live without our oil, and they can't live without our steel, and all of our natural resources. They can't even live without the water we ship down in the bottles because so much of theirs is polluted. Let them know square flat out here that they need us . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . You bet.

But it isn't going to be easy, boys. This is hardball. And they're going to come back and retaliate, and it won't be easy. But let's play it. Let's go for free trade all the way, wide open, both ways, and the highest bidder takes her all, and if they don't bid high enough they don't get it any more either. Slap a tax on them, all the

things that we export. If we're going to have a trade war, let them know that we're in position to win. And then, then they'll leave us alone and they'll let that Free Trade Agreement work.

Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely imperative that we go as a united front, defending our farmers and our country and we do whatever it takes to win, because we can't afford to lose. The province will go under if we don't win this battle.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I suggest to the Minister of Agriculture that he ought to take the former premier of this province, his own Premier, and go on a delegation right straight down to the United States and Washington, and present our case in person. I think it's that critical and that important that we ought to all do it together.

Mr. Speaker, I could talk for another hour on this but some of my colleagues need to get in a few words about this issue. So I'm going to rest my case in support. But there are certainly other times when we will disagree and I'll let you know at the time what those things are that we will disagree about. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to take just two or three minutes to enter into this debate to echo the support of an urbanite and someone who's associated with working people in this province, to throw my support behind this resolution.

But I want to caution members of the Assembly that the enemy in this particular war is not the American farmer and it's not the American working person any more than it's our farmer or our working person. The enemy in this war is precisely those who control the grain trade, those who determine where that durum wheat goes, those who determine the price set for that durum wheat, and those who would manipulate the market-place for the benefit, not of those who consume the product, but for their own pecuniary benefit, for the benefit of enriching themselves at the expense of all the rest of us -- farmer and worker, a Canadian and American.

This is not, Mr. Speaker, this is not a question of American farmers versus Canadian farmers. This is not a question of American workers versus Canadian workers. This is a question where we talk about building a coalition, where it is to the benefit of Canadian and American farmers to join together through their organizations to demand democratic control over the distribution of the grain that's produced on both sides of the border.

We in Canada have done that through organizations like the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool. The Americans have done that through their own organizations, such as the farmers' union cooperatives, through CenEx, through all those organizations that they themselves have built in order to insulate their family farm unit

and their neighbours from those who would, in fact, would enrich themselves at their expense.

So when we talk about joining a coalition here, Mr. Speaker, when we talk about getting together, it's important to realize that we get together with the right folks because it's in our benefit, it's in the benefit of Saskatchewan people and Saskatchewan farmers, to have the support of American farmers when we go to Washington to demand that this kind of punitive trade action, initiated because of the manipulation of the grain trading corporations . . . that it is in our benefit to make the most forceful case possible, that it be a joint resolution of the American farmers.

American farmers know full well that the price they get for their durum, as in the case of Canadian farmers, that the price that they both get for their durum wheat is not adequate, does not meet the cost of production, does not ensure that they are able to live and their families able to live in a way in which we all agree should happen. They know that in fact it is not in their benefit, it's not in their benefit to try to carve out and artificially inflate a price in a market-place, that it's not in their long-term best benefit to do so.

So I say, Mr. Speaker, that I think all members of this Assembly are going to support this resolution; but in doing so, that it be seen not as an attack on American farmers or American working people but on those in fact who would pit us against the Americans, who would pit Canadian workers against American workers or Canadian farmers against American workers.

Now perhaps the member from Estevan thinks that it's some long- or short-term benefit in fact to create a little kerfuffle between Canadian farmers and American farmers. But I could tell the member from Estevan that those of us on this side of the House don't believe so. The resolution is aimed directly at bringing people together -- at bringing people together, putting forward a solution saying that there is concern that has to be addressed; that there are things which are happening on the other side of the border which are based not on fact but in fact are based on a manipulated version of fact and that these resolutions tries to address.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would take it that all members of this House would not, would not oppose this resolution.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Amendment negatived.

Mr. Devine: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to take this opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to say a few words, then propose an amendment to the motion that has been presented today.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, it's really interesting to listen to New Democrats, whether they're from Rosemont or whether they pretend to be representing rural people, and they're encouraging fairer trade

between Canada and the United States.

If I'm not mistaken, Mr. Speaker, members of the New Democratic Party were very much against the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and the United States. I believe they're on record as being against it. They're against it, Mr. Speaker, against the North American Free Trade Agreement, and they introduce a motion today wanting fair trade and free trade in durum wheat between Canada and the United States.

Well I'm sure the general public, Mr. Speaker, as well as yourself, must begin to wonder what it is that the New Democrats really believe in. I can recall when there was a free-trading Republican president in the United States, whether it was Mr. Bush -- President Bush -- or President Ronald Reagan, the NDP in this House would complain about agriculture policy coming from the president of the United States and how much they were against free trade.

The member from Rosemont, members and others, would bitterly complain about Ronald Reagan or George Bush being free traders. Now isn't it interesting, Mr. Speaker, when we're in a trade war now, it's between Democrats in the United States and Democrats on the Canadian side, because the Liberals didn't support free trade either.

And I haven't heard one New Democrat say, well I would like to see that the President of the United States, Mr. Bill Clinton -- President Bill Clinton -- I wish he would really live up to the principles of free trade. Not once did you mention that. You are quick to mention Ronald Reagan, quick to mention George Bush, but the hypocrisy of you standing in your place, asking now for fair trade when you've got a new Democrat in the presidency of the United States and you've got New Democrats now in this House and you've got Liberals in Ottawa who don't support free trade -- and didn't -- is very, very apparent, and particularly when members stand up here and say, well we want to see fair trade for farmers and free trade now going back and forth. Where were you when it mattered? Where were you when it mattered?

And they now are saying from their seat, the member from Rosemont is saying, he doesn't believe in free trade. He doesn't believe in free trade; he says fair trade. He doesn't know what that means. He doesn't now what it means. He has no idea what it means. He wouldn't sign an agreement.

If you signed the agreement and said, this is fair as well as free, do you think he'd sign it? No. Because politically he's so hidebound he couldn't come to the conclusion that free might mean fair. He'd have to say, as he just did, Mr. Speaker, we have to control it on both sides of the border and then it would be fair.

Now show me a controlled market internationally -- at the GATT negotiations or in North America -- where it is fair. The control has been unfair, where people have brought in their own measures in Europe and their own measures in the United States, and they've dreamt up all these

bribes, all these inconsistencies. And we've spent years and years and years at GATT to open it up, to make it free, which would be more fair.

Well I find it really interesting at this time that the NDP in this administration here who were against all the principles of free trade, against all the principles of fair trade internationally that were written down at the GATT and brought into North America, now say they want a resolution where we can support them towards having free and fair trade with the United States with respect to durum wheat.

Well I just point out to the members opposite, if you would stand in your place and have the courage to even mention the fact that there's a New Democrat president of the United States who has his members, like Senator Max Baucus, a Democrat on the other side of the border, who's been against trade with Canada, who's stopped every kind of trade issue against Canadians . . . it hurt. And now he has got a president that's a New Democrat who is closing trade with Canada time and time and time again. And they won't mention his name and they won't mention the fact he's a Democrat. Now he's in increasing trouble because people see through the façade. He doesn't believe in free trade or fair trade. It's all politics.

(1645)

And we see it now with the NDP. They will not talk about a New Democratic president in the United States. They've talked against a Republican, but not once will they call him down and say a New Democratic president in the United States, a Democrat president, is the man behind this action against Canada. And that's the truth.

The President of the United States today, President Clinton, knows that there's politics behind the fact that he can have Montana and North Dakota farmers all upset about Canadian imports. And the minister even knows, even given the fact that the United States will be short on durum wheat, the minister and the New Democrats will not take the case to the President of the United States. They won't do it. They won't blame a Democrat.

Mr. Speaker, the member from Rosemont can chirp from his seat and tell us all he knows about agriculture and trade. But he speaks volumes in this legislature about what the truth is with respect to the politics of this issue and New Democrats here and New Democrats on the other side of the border.

It's the same thing when it comes to international trade, international agreements on water. I had the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to invite the member for Rosemont down to look at water in south-eastern Saskatchewan, financed by both Americans and Canadians. And the joke there, as I've shared with the members opposite, they're thinking ironically of calling this Bob Lyons Lake in south-eastern Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, I can't mention the member's name

in here, but it's so ironic because the people know there that he did everything possible to stop the water.

And they've invited people -- both people in the United States that supported free trade and people in Minot and in North Dakota to support an international water development . . . have invited any member of the NDP caucus to go down and see if they can walk across the valley like they promised without getting wet. Walk across the water.

Well I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, I have heard, I have heard that there are people that can walk across water, but believe me, I don't think it's the member from Rosemont. I don't think it's the NDP Premier. But they're invited any time by the people of Estevan and the people of Minot that have supported international trade agreements, to go down now and look at the relationship between Minot and North Dakota and Estevan and south-eastern Saskatchewan, as a result of work that took years and years to develop a relationship.

And do you know what? It's free and it's fair, and Democratics on either side of the border can take a great deal of pride in that. Democrats in my riding can say, yes I know that it's a really good project; and yes, they're going to support it and they understand it.

People in Minot that are Democrats said yes, it's a good project. Conservatives and Republicans on both side of the border will say exactly the same thing, and people who have integrity in agriculture will say that free trade in agriculture, the principles of it, the principles of free trade and fair trade, should be endorsed by this legislature, and not the hypocrisy that is raised here in this legislature, Mr. Speaker.

So I want the House to remember that when they're bringing forward resolutions or motions that encourage more freedom internationally in economic development, that the kind of economic and political forces that have taken place here and activities, say just exactly the opposite.

Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: -- Order, order. I would just like to ask members when they're finished at 5 o'clock, to listen to the tape and to see who they can hear on the tape -- whether they can hear the member from Estevan or they hear themselves. And I think you will find you will hear yourselves on the tape. The member from Estevan has the floor and I wish members would give him that respect.

Mr. Devine: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know it bothers the NDP to hear the truth about fair and free trade. So I'll just present my motion, Mr. Speaker, or my amendment to the motion. And I move, and I'll find a seconder here from Souris-Cannington:

That the following words be inserted after the word "Assembly":

wholeheartedly supports the principle and

spirit of the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement and

And then we'll insert that into the motion, Mr. Speaker.

And what that says simply, Mr. Speaker, and it adds to the main motion, is that the principles of free trade internationally between Canada and the United States and internationally between other countries, should be respected. And I'd be interested to know if the New Democrats support the principles of free trade and the trade agreement between Canada and the United States.

And if they do, then maybe we've got a chance. Maybe we would have a chance to get some cooperation. If they say no to this, and the agreement was endorsed by the President of the United States, endorsed by the Prime Minister of Canada, then what does it say? It says they're just playing politics, they're just playing games, and they don't want any resolution at all. And they really don't care about farmers; they just care about politics.

I so move.

The Speaker: -- There's some difficulty in determining whether the amendment is foreign . . . or the amendment is foreign to the main motion, but . . . Order, order, order. But I do believe that the Free Trade Agreement does concern itself with agriculture and in that sense I will say that the amendment is in order. But it is rather doubtful.

Mr. D'Autremont: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have to wholeheartedly support the entire motion now, both the amendment and the main motion as presented by the Minister of Agriculture, because this agreement does deal with avenues within the Free Trade Agreement.

And when the Agriculture minister comes forward expressing his motion, he is talking about the free movement of goods and products across Canadian borders, across the U.S. borders, as outlined within the Free Trade Agreement. And that is exactly what the American farmers are complaining about. All of a sudden the Free Trade Agreement, which they wholeheartedly supported when they thought it would benefit them solely, is now providing a benefit to Canadian farmers.

And the minister, in bringing forward his motion in asking the federal Minister of Agriculture to react strongly to the actions being taken place by the U.S. farmers and by the U.S. government of President Clinton, is supporting -- although he may not have entirely wished to do so -- the spirit and the principles of the Free Trade Agreement. And for that I can support, Mr. Speaker. Although it is kind of surprising that the members opposite were so vigorously opposed to the Free Trade Agreement and to Reagan and Bush when they were the American presidents and they were supporting free trade which is benefiting Canadian farmers.

In the case of the Clinton administration, perhaps because the name of his party is Democratic, they have not said a thing about the American administration and their support of the American farmers and the fact that the American administration was prepared to bargain away our access to the American markets for votes in Texas.

And that's why . . . it's the hypocrisy of the government, though, that is at question, I believe, Mr. Speaker, because we do support the motion. And it is surprising when you look at what is happening with the grain movements across the U.S.

One of the main aggravants in this thing . . . one of the main irritants is the Wheat Pool trucks that are hauling commodities across the border. They pull into the local elevators along the border on the U.S. side and plug the system. And yet it was the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool who opposed cross-border shipments of barley when farmers could do it. They were opposed to that.

And yet today that very same company is one of the main avenues by which both barley and durum is going across the U.S. border. And, Mr. Speaker, you have to wonder as to what their ulterior motives are in this very thing. Are they trying to aggravate the American farmers to such an extent that they can convince their government to close the border to U.S. shipments, forcing farmers therefore to deal with the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool?

That's what they did with the barley and perhaps that's what they're trying to do with durum, Mr. Speaker. The minister talked that the Americans are operating a two-price system right now in their wheat; one price for export for the EEP (export enhancement program) program, which we as Canadian farmers have to compete against directly.

And so when we sell our durum into the U.S. we're selling it, or we're prepared to sell it at a price just above their EEP price but the American farmer, because he has a two-price system that the minister talked about, is unprepared to do so.

But isn't it somewhat surprising that the member from Canora, who talks against the American two-price system that he described, supports an organization, the National Farmers Union, that calls for a two-price system in Canada. Inconsistent, Mr. Speaker, totally inconsistent because on one hand it's politically attractive for them to condemn the American farmer, to condemn the federal government, and on the other side they try to support their political allies in National Farmers Union on the two-price system in Canada. The two-price system in Canada, Mr. Speaker, benefited only the farmers in eastern Canada who sold directly to the mills.

Mr. Speaker, because we support the amendment in general, because I support in particular the amendment as brought forward by the member from Estevan, Mr. Speaker, I believe we should express the

desires of this House at the present time. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Amendment negatived on division.

The division bells rang from 4:59 p.m. until 5 p.m.

Motion agreed to on the following recorded division.

Yeas

Wiens	Sonntag
Tchorzewski	Scott
Lingenfelter	Crofford
Shillington	Wormsbecker
Teichrob	Stanger
Johnson	Harper
Kowalsky	Jess
MacKinnon	Langford
Penner	Devine
Lyons	Boyd
Lautermilch	Toth
Murray	Britton
Hamilton	D'Autremont
Trew	Bergman
Whitmore	

- 29

Nays

-- Nil

MOTIONS

**Forward Votes and Proceedings to Federal Minister of
Agriculture**

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: -- Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Churchill Downs:

That the **Votes and Proceedings** for today's debate be forwarded to the federal Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Goodale.

I so move.

Motion agreed to.

The Assembly adjourned at 5:02 p.m.