

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
March 14, 1995

The Assembly met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. McPherson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I have a petition. I'll read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to oppose changes to present legislation regarding firearm ownership, and instead urge the federal government to deal with the criminal use of firearms by imposing stiffer penalties on abusers.

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

Mr. Speaker, these are constituents from the Assiniboia, Lafleche, Wood Mountain area of the province.

Mr. Goohsen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to present petitions today on behalf of the people from the Maple Creek, Gull Lake, Medicine Hat regions of the province. And I will read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to allocate adequate funding dedicated towards the double-laning of Highway No. 1; and further, that the Government of Saskatchewan direct any monies available from the federal infrastructure program towards double-laning Highway No. 1, rather than allocating these funds towards capital construction projections in the province.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And I would like to thank Bev Christie from Maple Creek for sending these in today.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Clerk: — According to order the following petitions have been reviewed, and pursuant to rule 11(7) they are hereby read and received.

Of citizens of the province petitioning the Assembly to allocate adequate funding dedicated toward the double-laning of Highway No. 1.

And of citizens of the province petitioning the Assembly to oppose changes to federal legislation regarding firearm ownership.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Ms. Hamilton: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the

Assembly, our guests today from Wilfred Hunt School, seated in the west gallery. We have 25 students in grades 7 and 8. Young adults in our community who are visiting the legislature today and then will be walking back and enjoying the beauty of the day. I hope they enjoy question period and that we're all able to be in good form and behaviour for them during that time.

And accompanying them today is Mr. Brad Howard, their teacher. I'll look forward to meeting with them briefly, and a photo on the steps later on. I ask all members to join with me in welcoming the students from Wilfred Hunt School.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McPherson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and through you to members of the Legislative Assembly, a couple of constituents from the Shaunavon constituency and good friends of mine, Nick and Evelyn McCuaig, in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. I ask that all the members welcome them here today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Bradley: — Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a great pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the members of the legislature, a group visiting here today from Pangman School. They're grade 5 and 6 students that are here today, and they're accompanied by their teacher, Judy Schwindt, and chaperons Todd Schwindt, Donna Lillejord, and Al Huckabay.

It's really nice that they're here this week being as that it's Education Week, and I will enjoy meeting with them after question period. And after they have a tour, and we'll have drinks and pictures. I'd just like everyone to join me in a warm welcome to the students from Pangman here today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to introduce a group of nine cancer patients from the Cancer Patient Lodge who are here with us today to observe question period. I know all members will want to join with me in welcoming them here today and also wishing them the best of luck in their treatment that they're now involved in.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and through you to the Assembly, I just noticed a gentleman who was a former bank manager, Mr. Miles Lozinsky, sitting in the gallery, and I'd like to invite members of the Assembly to welcome him to the gallery and to the Assembly this afternoon.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Hitachi Expansion

Ms. Lorje: — Mr. Speaker, more good news from Saskatoon. Another business expanding and new jobs being created. Yesterday Hitachi Canadian Industries announced a \$2.2 million expansion of their Saskatoon plant. This follows a \$3.5 million expansion that took place last year.

The most recent expansion, Mr. Speaker, was supported by our government through a training allowance of \$262,000. Mr. Speaker, since Hitachi first came to Saskatoon it has increased its workforce from 34 to 115 good jobs. Many are graduates of either SIAST (Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology) or the U of S (University of Saskatchewan).

Providing work for Saskatchewan's young people is just one Hitachi benefit. Another is expanding Saskatchewan's export market. Hitachi exports 60 per cent of its product to the United States and another 35 per cent to Japan. At Hitachi in Saskatoon we see the goals of Saskatchewan's *Partnership for Renewal* in action, namely, worker training, increased exports, and the development and marketing of advanced technology.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to commend both Hitachi and officials at our Economic Development department for their part in providing good jobs and a good future. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

National Recognition for Sacred Heart Community School

Ms. Murray: — Mr. Speaker, during Education Week I want to mention a school in the constituency of Regina Elphinstone which has received national recognition for its innovative programs. The Toronto *Globe and Mail* came to Regina to find a positive example for the educational reforms suggested by an Ontario royal commission on learning. That example is Sacred Heart School. Sacred Heart is one of four community schools established 13 years ago in urban core areas. These schools were meant to work closely with their local communities to combat the special problems of the inner-city school.

Under the guidance of principal Len Kleisinger, Sacred Heart has pushed the idea of parental involvement far beyond its traditional meaning. With the cooperation of a parent advisory council, the school has several programs appropriate to its students and their environment. For instance the school day begins at 7 a.m. with breakfast for any student who arrives. There are preschool programs for three- and four-year-olds and nutrition classes. Of particular interest for many of the students, there are courses in Indian and Metis history and culture.

To enforce the concept of parental involvement, the advisory council controls \$5,000 in community development grants as well as a \$5,000 grant for curriculum development. This means teachers consult with parents in the selection of materials. Consultation takes place before the teaching begins as well as after. Principal Kleisinger believes that the more the parents are involved, the better the children do.

Sacred Heart School is to be congratulated . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order, order. The member's time has run out.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Anniversary of Women's Suffrage in Saskatchewan

Ms. Stanger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today is the 79th anniversary of the day women were given the vote in Saskatchewan. On this day in 1916 Saskatchewan was the second province in Canada to get women the vote, after four years of petitioning.

Mr. Speaker, important milestones such as these are good to remember because they demonstrate that we as a society have made some progress. But also the fact that we label as progress something so obviously proper for a modern society suggests that we have a way to go yet.

On this day when we remember half the population's entry into the Saskatchewan political process, we should also note some other markers along the way.

In 1917 the first woman candidate ran in the constituency of Thunder Creek, and lost. In a by-election in 1919, Sarah K. Ramsland from Pelly became the first woman MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly).

It was not until 1938 that a general election had more than one woman candidate. The CCF (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation) ran two; both of them lost.

The grandmother of the member from Regina Albert North was the first but certainly not the last CCF-NDP (New Democratic Party) member from Maple Creek. And Marjorie Cooper of Regina was the first and only woman elected four times — from 1952 to 1964.

Victories to celebrate, Mr. Speaker; set-backs . . .

The Speaker: — Order. The member's time has run out.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Education Week

Mrs. Teichrob: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The theme of Education Week, making tomorrow come true, is playing a role in Education Week activities in my riding of Saskatoon River Heights. L'Ecole River Heights, or to anglophones, River Heights School, has invited the public to view its classes at the mall at Lawson Heights.

Throughout the week, students will be showcasing their skills and showing why they are proud to be students at L'Ecole River Heights. These students, in the spirit of making tomorrow come true, have joined with businesses at the mall by decorating store windows, and each classroom has made a banner for the mall depicting a springtime theme. A special display area includes the students' artwork and video tapes of the students working on

various projects.

Many of the students are witnessing firsthand activity in the business sector which demonstrates the link between business and education. And that, Mr. Speaker, is where the theme, making tomorrow come true, fits in.

I would like to congratulate the students at L'Ecole River Heights, the principal, Ron Boden, and the staff for their hard work in promoting Education Week and for involving the public in the process of educating our children. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Volunteer Awards

Mr. Flavel: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has always been held in high regard because of the number of people who volunteer for events and worthwhile causes right across the province.

Well I have an example of this in my own riding and would like to recognize several individuals and groups who have received awards for volunteering in communities where they live.

The 1994 Last Touch awards dinner was recently held in Cupar. These volunteer recognition awards are handed by the Last Touch Regional Recreation Association which supports volunteers in recreation support, sport, and culture.

Mr. Brock Turner of Cupar received a volunteer recognition award for his many years of service to the Cupar Golf Club since the late 1960s. He helped to ensure that the course was kept in good condition.

A special award of achievement was presented to the Southey rink committee for rebuilding the rink after the old one was destroyed in a fire in June.

The Dysart volunteer fire department received the community spirit award, which honours volunteers who don't fall under the category of sport, recreation, or culture, but make a significant contribution to the community.

Betty Tershur of Raymore and Sheila Fraser of Strasbourg also received volunteer recognition awards.

Congratulations to all of the award recipients for volunteering their time and energy to make their community a better place to live in. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Saskatchewan Country Music Awards

Mr. Sonntag: — Howdy, Mr. Speaker. You all probably heard of the phrase, "kindly keep it country." The sixth annual Saskatchewan country music awards are handed out as a grand finale to the country music appreciation week in Saskatoon.

Some 1,400 people attended the award ceremonies at the

Centennial Auditorium. Meadow Lake's favourite gospel singers, the Cockrum Sisters, were nominated in four categories.

And the winners were: Sheila Ann, originally from Dodsland, was presented with the legend and legacy award. Scott Kyle King of Regina captured four awards, including best male vocalist, single and album of the year, and most promising entertainer.

The female vocalist of the year was Terry Harris of Battleford, and the Johner Brothers from Midale were named entertainers of the year and group of the year. Rosetown's Marilyn Faye Parney won video of the year.

CJVR radio station in Melfort was presented with the award of merit for playing the most Saskatchewan artists and CJWW radio in Saskatoon was named radio station of the year.

Don Mitchell of CKBI-CIPA TV was named country music person of the year and on-air personality of the year.

I would like to congratulate all of the award recipients for entertaining audiences throughout North America and beyond with excellent country music.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Crown Corporations Construction Agreement

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the opposition caucus is pleased once again to present some questions we received through our "Mr. Premier, I want to know" initiative. We feel this is an exciting way for ordinary taxpayers to communicate directly with the government. It looks like the people of Saskatchewan agree, Mr. Speaker, because this program continues to work very well. We've been inundated with responses from people across this province.

Mr. Speaker, I would direct my question to the Premier or his designate, and it comes from Kelly Fraser of Kindersley. Mr. Premier, your union labour preference on Crown corporation construction jobs is unfair to the taxpayers of Saskatchewan. Please remove all union preference clauses from all government tenders so that work in this province is fair to all taxpayers.

Hon. Mr. Anguish: — We appreciate Kelly's question. That's exactly what this government has done. We've put in place a Crown corporation tendering policy. We feel it gives a level playing-field and good balance so that whether firms are unionized or non-unionized, they will have a fair chance on doing work for Crown corporations in Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Workplace Injuries

Mr. Goohsen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This question comes from Pat Rayner from Regina. I want to know why under the Workers' Compensation Board rules, no one is responsible for injuries that are deliberately caused by an employee. Also, why have these rules taken away the right for full legal action against such persons?

Perhaps the Minister of Labour would care to respond to that.

Hon. Mr. Anguish: — Well the member would appreciate, in the days when the Conservative government was in, most constituency offices of MLAs were inundated with calls. A lot of the casework done in the constituency offices was Workers' Compensation Board related.

Since that time all members of this Assembly will recognize that the workload coming into our constituency offices from workers' compensation problems has diminished considerably.

There's been some undertakings over at the Workers' Compensation Board to much improve the role of the board not only for injured workers, but also for employers.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Labour Standards Amendments

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This question comes from Devin Malakoff from Regina: Mr. Premier, I want to know how you could have the nerve to put thousands of employees' incomes at risk with the mandatory benefits legislation for part-time workers. This law is going to cut hours for part-time workers because employers will opt not to give over 15 hours.

Hon. Mr. Anguish: — Well we appreciate the question. I think that what we have to realize is that in Saskatchewan there's a climate whereby employers and employees for the most part, at least, actually work together for the benefit of each other. Most employers in Saskatchewan appreciate their employees. They value them. They have considerable costs in having employees trained. Employees appreciate the jobs they have.

We believe that the companies who are coming into Saskatchewan, that are expanding in Saskatchewan, are really a testimony to the good labour climate that we have here. In fact if you look at the labour climate in Saskatchewan, if you use the measurement across other jurisdictions, we have about one-third of the labour problems that exist on the national average.

We have companies like Hitachi. We have companies like the call centres for CIBC (Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce) and Sears. There are many, many employers moving into the province, many employers like Bourgault Industries expanding in the province.

There is a good climate here in Saskatchewan. And the labour laws that have been brought into place, I think that the Saskatchewan public required them. I think that workers required them, and I think that the employers who appreciate their employees required them as well.

And I think that we have a good balance in Saskatchewan with our labour legislation, and not only the organizations and the companies that I have mentioned. We'll see more of that coming in the future because of the good job that our government is doing in setting a climate for business and labour.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ban on Replacement Workers

Mr. Britton: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too have a question for the Premier, and it comes from Maureen Morin from Edam. And Maureen wants to know, Mr. Premier: I want to know what is the compelling need to even consider banning replacement workers in the event of a strike. As far as I am concerned, when these people keep striking they should be fired. It is because of them that our economy is the way it is now.

Hon. Mr. Anguish: — We appreciate the question that's been sent in to the opposition in regard to replacement workers.

Some jurisdictions across Canada ban replacement workers; other jurisdictions choose not to ban replacement workers.

You will note that some cases such as the mine disaster up in the Northwest Territories was an issue that brought replacement workers to the forefront. Many people in that area felt that if replacement workers had been banned, that the deaths would have never happened and the unfortunate event would not have taken place where a worker obviously was pushed too far and caused the death of other people in that particular instance.

The whole problem with banning replacement workers has to do with the essential services and how far you go on that.

What we'd like to think that we can do in Saskatchewan is that we can work with the employers of this province, that we can work with the employees of this province, whether they are organized labour or whether they are unorganized, to make sure that we have a climate in Saskatchewan that's right for working men and women and is also right for businesses to prosper within the province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Labour Legislation

Mr. Martens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This question comes from Joyce Callfas from Lloydminster: Mr. Premier, I want to know why most of your legislation is to please the unions. It will ensure their votes but is killing our province. As for the deficit, anyone could balance if they bled the populace white.

Hon. Mr. Anguish: — While I appreciate being able to respond to that particular question, it's based on some false assumptions. And we are not geared as a government to represent any one sector; we are elected by the people of this province to represent all people of the province.

We were elected by the people of Saskatchewan to get the financial house of this province in order; we've done that.

We have passed legislation that is sometimes controversial, whether it be in regard to business or whether it be in regard to working men and women. We've passed legislation on a great number of items, and the member would well understand what items have been controversial and what items have not been controversial.

What we've done, on balance, is trying to provide good government for the people of this province, and I think that in the next election they'll show that we have provided good government for Saskatchewan people.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as you've heard from individuals around this province, there remains a great deal of concern regarding the NDP's labour legislation.

While the government has backed off on many of the offending provisions in The Labour Standards Act, they conveniently left them in the Act as amendments yet to be proclaimed, like a sword over the heads of small-business people across this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Labour. Mr. Minister, if you truly believe these provisions are ill-advised and need not be proclaimed, will you support the legislation I'll be introducing this afternoon that will repeal them from the Act?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Anguish: — Absolutely not. We have a good climate in the province of Saskatchewan, jobs are being developed. Businesses are doing quite well, thank you. New businesses are coming into the province. The only thing that the Bill you're bringing into the House this afternoon shows is your blatant disregard for the balance of working men and women in this province, and you should be ashamed of yourself.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, your refusal to remove the amendments from the Act tells us that it's pure and simple that you are the friend of labour, the friend of unions in this province. The only thing that you care about is unions in this province, and everyone knows it. Everyone knows that that's clearly where you and your government stand. You believe your union friends should take precedence over small business and job creation at every turn. When you backed down from the Co-op upgrader deal because of your dictatorial style, you repealed the legislation with regard to that.

That's all we're asking for with this as well, Mr. Minister. We are even prepared to amend our Bill so that all of the offending provisions are removed, as they have not been proclaimed yet.

Mr. Minister, will you agree with the legislation that we'll be bringing forward instead of holding out a carrot to the union

leaders across this province?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Anguish: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't support your Bill; in fact I support very little that you do. I don't blame you as the new Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party in this province, but I certainly blame some of your colleagues, especially those sitting on your front bench.

During the 1980s, the Conservative Government of Saskatchewan tried to divide urban people from rural people. You tried to divide organized labour from unorganized labour. You tried to distance between working men and women and business.

And part of the agenda of this government has been to mend those wounds that you created in Saskatchewan. Whether it's between urban and rural people of this province or whether it's between working men and women or whether it's between business and labour, we are mending and healing the wounds that you inflicted on the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Health Board Deficits

Mr. McPherson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last week Liberals tabled district health board financial statements showing that seven health boards had more than \$22 million in deficits in '93-94. Today I table nine more statements — nine more — Mr. Speaker. The health deficits that we now know amount to some \$27 million. I'm hearing from people across the province who are very concerned about this trend. They're also concerned that their own government has not, has not told them the extent of the overall deficits for the health boards of last year.

My question is to the Health minister. Will the minister tell us today how many health boards had deficits last year, and what the total Health deficit was for the province? And will he tell us today, today Mr. Speaker, instead of waiting until after the next provincial election?

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to answer this question on behalf of the Minister of Health. Obviously there's a SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities) convention meeting in Saskatoon today, and a number of our colleagues are attending a session in Saskatoon. But what I would say to the member from Shaunavon is that your credibility, when it comes to asking questions in this House, is questionable at best.

Last week the Leader of the Liberal Party brought in statistics as it related to the Regina Health Board, as it related to the health board. She hasn't asked a question on health since, and there's a good reason why. Because when she raised the issue, the next day Royce Gill said that the information was false that she brought to this Assembly. And I say to you, Mr. Member from Shaunavon, when the lists that you bring to this House on political appointments then turn out to . . . in the *Leader-Post* to

be false, and people go to the press and say that it wasn't true; and you don't have the courage to stand and apologize for the misinformation you bring here. Your leader brings misinformation about the health board in Regina.

What I say, I'll be questioning and looking at the information you brought today to see whether there's any accuracy to the facts that you bring here.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McPherson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm surprised that the House Leader would call in to question the financial statements, the financial statements of their own health care districts.

The Speaker: — Order, order. Order, order. We just can't have that interruption going across the floor.

Mr. McPherson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week, Mr. Speaker, the Health minister denied knowing about health deficits for this year, 1994-95. Yet the legislation establishing the boards requires that he approve any planned deficits. We now see that at least one health board, the Twin Rivers Health Board, did include a planned deficit for this year, Mr. Speaker — a deficit that a Lloydminster newspaper report, which I'm tabling here today, says was approved by the minister.

You are putting your stamp of approval on these health board deficits, and everyone in Saskatchewan knows the only way to pay off a deficit is to raise taxes or to cut services. So my question again is to the minister: can you confirm that the minister did in fact approve the Twin Rivers deficit? And can you tell us how many other health board deficits were approved and for how much?

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I say to the member opposite again, obviously these questions of detail in Health will be answered in a very succinct manner by the minister in estimates. If the member cares to be here for estimates, he will be able to answer and ask detailed questions about the Health department, and you will be able to have a fair exchange with the minister at that time on these kind of detailed questions.

But I say when it comes to credibility on issues you've raised in the House so far this year . . . whether it's the job numbers on StatsCanada which you are clearly silent on for the last four weeks; we know why you are silent because you misled with information you brought to the House about the job record of the private sector in this province by saying they were fewer jobs, when in fact there are 9,000 more.

When it comes to the issue of the health care board in Regina, Royce Gill says that you brought false information to the House. When it comes to your opinion on VLTs (video lottery terminal), you've flip-flop so many times you don't know which side of the issue you're on.

I say to you, we will be looking at this and giving answers in estimates on these detailed questions. But I say to you, try to get your facts straight before you come to the House, and it would

help the process a great deal.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McPherson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the member opposite is worried about the facts, why doesn't he address what we've been tabling? This morning, Mr. Speaker, at a news conference announcing a new kidney treatment program that will happen some day down the road, the Health minister was asked why he was announcing this so far in advance of the program implementation. The minister said, and I quote: the purpose was to share with the public early. Well that's a laudable principle, Mr. Speaker.

This is the same minister who told the legislature that he would not inform us about the Health deficits for this year until 90 days after the fiscal year. I think the minister is betting, Mr. Speaker, that the June 30 election will be far gone and he won't have to . . . (inaudible) . . . Okay, Mr. Speaker.

To the minister, will you extend your stated principle of sharing with the public early and commit to tabling the amount of the Health deficit at the earliest possible time and do it before the next provincial election? Now as a member of cabinet you could give us that assurance today. Will you?

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I have indicated to the member opposite that these detailed questions that he's asking will be answered in fact in Health estimates and he can raise them as he knows he can. But obviously he will have to be here for estimates in order to do that.

When he talks about the date of the provincial election, I want to say clearly for a Liberal from Shaunavon to be wanting an early election is a little bit like a turkey wanting an early Christmas. But I can say to you, Mr. Member, that the election will come soon enough and we will see how things sort out.

But what I can guarantee to you, that next time estimates comes up on Health in the House, if you are here you will be able to ask these kind of detailed questions.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Potential Rail Strike

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it becomes clearer every day where the priorities of this government lie and it certainly isn't with small-business people or farmers in the province of Saskatchewan. It clearly lies with the union movement.

Yesterday the Minister of Agriculture said that he would not support back-to-work legislation to keep the rail lines open and Saskatchewan grain moving to port. The Ag minister, who supposedly represents agriculture in this province, Mr. Speaker, has lined up four square behind the rail unions.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister of Labour in questioning said, that there should be not 1 cent of economic loss to this province with a federal rail strike. My question is to

the Premier: do you support the dithering of the Minister of Agriculture or do you support the Minister of Labour? Do you support agriculture in this province, Mr. Premier? Will you urge the federal government to bring in back-to-work legislation sooner rather than later, sir?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Anguish: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premier supports both the Minister of Agriculture and myself because we're saying the same thing. You inflame the situation; it's a serious situation, it needs to be monitored. Of the five unions that are involved in regard to the current lockout, three have signed tentative agreements with the rail company. One is very close to that. The other union, we expect there can be an accommodation reached whereby this situation will not escalate.

It's important for us to have the grain and the other products move from this province to their markets. We take it seriously. We have contacted the federal government and the unions, letting them know our intentions and the seriousness with which we take this situation. And I think that you overreact, sir, to be calling for something to remedy something else that has not yet occurred.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Obviously the minister got his knuckles rapped sometime last night because there's 3,200 out on strike now, sir, and there is no time to waste. There's a railcar shortage already in place. Elevator agents contacted this morning said that there was already a shortage of cars and that if action is not taken, it will be exacerbated even worse in the days to come.

Your government, the Government of Saskatchewan, represents the province with the most to lose, sir. No one else in Canada will feel this impact as much as the province of Saskatchewan. Now the time to act, sir, is today, not yesterday. You said yesterday not 1 cent of economic loss to this province. Are you now prepared to live up to your words of yesterday, sir, and have the Premier back legislation in the federal parliament to make sure this doesn't happen to this province?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Anguish: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do want the member opposite to realize, and he should realize this, that first off this is a federal matter. We have made representations to the federal minister.

An Hon. Member: — Table them.

Hon. Mr. Anguish: — We will also . . . the former premier asked for us to table them. We'd be more than happy — I don't have those responses here with me — we'd be more than happy to do that.

This is a federal matter. We're watching it very closely. We'll be making further representations to the federal government.

We would also ask you to keep in mind, what is the Liberal opposition doing here in the legislature? Are they doing the same thing as you? They have their cousins sitting there in Ottawa, with no apparent action on their part. What representations have you made, rather than making political gain in this legislature?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Mr. Minister, half of your cabinet is up facing SARM today. And I am sure the questions are coming thick and fast about what your government is prepared to do.

Your Minister of Agriculture yesterday says he will not support legislation. You, sir, say that there should be not 1 cent of economic loss to this province. Why don't you take your responsibility seriously, and if the federal Liberals aren't up to the mark, sir, why aren't you making representation and make sure that they are going to protect the farmers of this province from an economic disaster that's looming on the horizon? Why don't you do that, sir?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Anguish: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member should just calm down a little bit and listen to what the answers are.

We take the seriousness of the situation full-heartedly. We have made representations to the unions involved and to the federal ministers involved. We will continue to make representations to them, and we will be monitoring this situation very closely. We do take the problems of Saskatchewan people, whether they're farmers or whether they're urban people or whether they are organized or unorganized . . . contrary to what the hon. member did when you were in government in this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Mr. Minister, those representations have fallen on deaf ears. As of this morning there are 3,200 out and another 4,000 waiting to go. We are at the height of the shipping season in this country, sir, and day by day the losses will mount. If the elevator agents in this province are saying they're short of cars today, think what they will be short tomorrow.

These people have had ample opportunity in the last 18 months to sort this mess out. It shouldn't fall on the backs of agriculture in this province and the farm families of this province to make up for the dithering of the federal government and the dithering of your government, sir. Are you prepared to ask the Premier to call Ottawa and say, we will back legislation the minute you bring it in? Are you prepared to do that?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, we have made it very clear that we have approached the federal government; in no uncertain terms, said how important the settlement of this

dispute is to the farmers of Saskatchewan. I say to the member opposite, that your style is that back-to-work legislation is the instantaneous reaction. We say the federal Minister of Agriculture has a role to play, the federal minister responsible for labour, of using their good office, and in fact their ability as ministers to become involved and settle this dispute without back-to-work legislation — back-to-work legislation being only used as a last resort.

Now of course this is an important issue for farmers, but what's even more important and we'll be dealing with here in a few moments, and we would ask for all members to support us in questioning the federal government's change to the Crow rate which is going to drastically increase the amount farmers pay for freight. Also the announcement of major changes to the rail system in this province, which will mean abandonment of rail in many parts of this province.

Mr. Speaker, after question period, I will be tabling a chart of the rails that are proposed for abandonment under the federal government . . .

The Speaker: — Next question. Next question.

Youth Smoking Legislation

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health. Mr. Minister, last year your government introduced Bill 68, an Act to prohibit the sale of tobacco to young persons. That legislation was widely supported by various health organizations who are concerned about the number of young people smoking and about the serious health problems which they may experience later in life.

At the time, Mr. Minister, it seemed like your government was prepared to take action to address this problem. In January, however, you announced that you were pulling this legislation and counting on — guess who — the federal government to act instead.

Mr. Minister, why are you waiting for the federal government to address the problem of young smokers in Saskatchewan? Why aren't you showing some leadership by proceeding with this legislation?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, as is obviously the case, we want to make sure that the proper consultation is completed. The federal government has also brought forward legislation which helps us in trying to attempt to reduce the number of young people taking up the smoking addiction because we know it's a serious health problem.

You will want to watch carefully as the consultations go on and we would appreciate input from your caucus as well. But I say to you this is a high priority for our government and something we will be working on in the months to come.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

A Bill to repeal The Labour Standards Amendment Act, 1994 and The Trade Union Amendment Act, 1994

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move an Act to repeal The Labour Standards Amendment Act, 1994 and The Trade Union Amendment Act, 1994 be now introduced and read the first time.

The division bells rang from 2:14 p.m. until 2:23 p.m.

Motion negated on the following recorded division.

Yeas

| | | |
|---------|---------|----------|
| Boyd | Devine | Swenson |
| Neudorf | Martens | Goohsen |
| Toth | Britton | Muirhead |

— 9

Nays

| | | |
|--------------|----------|--------------|
| Van Mulligen | Thompson | Lingenfelter |
| Shillington | Anguish | Simard |
| Johnson | Goulet | Lautermilch |
| Kowalsky | Mitchell | Penner |
| Upshall | Hagel | Bradley |
| Lorje | Teichrob | Pringle |
| Cline | Murray | Hamilton |
| Trew | Draper | Whitmore |
| Sonntag | Flavel | Langford |
| Scott | Kujawa | Stanger |
| Knezacek | Harper | Keeping |
| Carlson | | |

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ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

Mr. Muirhead: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask leave of the Assembly to make a statement.

Leave granted.

STATEMENT BY A MEMBER

Appeal of Conviction

Mr. Muirhead: — I'd like to thank you, Mr. Speaker, and to the members of the Assembly.

Nearly 17 years ago today . . . 17 years ago, I was elected as the member of the Legislative Assembly for the constituency of Arm River. At that time I entered public life because I truly believed there was a place for people with a Christian faith. My parents taught me as a young boy that the word of God in the Bible should always be my guide for living. In my heart, I truly believe that I made a genuine effort to live as a good and decent person and I cherished my reputation for being a man of his word.

John Diefenbaker was a friend of my father. From the time I was a young man, I admired the Chief because he represented good, solid values of honour and integrity to me. In my years of service as a MLA for Arm River, I tried my best to live up to the ideals of Mr. Diefenbaker. Now, at the age of 63, I find myself facing one of the darkest times of my entire life because a judge in court said that in the eyes of the law I am guilty of one count of fraud to obtain a saddle.

It should be noted that in the same trial, I had been charged with breach of trust and this charge was stayed because the court concluded there was no personal gain for me on either charge. The Bible says in the Ten Commandments, thou shalt not steal. And I say before God, who comes before all else in my life, I can without hesitation say that I did not steal.

In our free and democratic society we value the belief that a person is innocent until proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that they are guilty. Sometimes the justice system fails, and innocent people are persecuted and made to suffer the consequences of a justice system that can and does make mistakes.

The very fact in our system of justice . . . we have an appeal process that goes right up to the Supreme Court of Canada and supposedly shows that we as a people have a commitment to protecting innocent citizens from being wrongly accused and sentenced. The case of Guy Paul Morin, the innocent young man who was falsely charged with murder and put in prison, though he was innocent, comes to my mind. Should we as a society have denied him the right to appeal because a lower court said Mr. Morin is guilty, even though he strongly stated that he is innocent of wrongdoing?

Mr. Speaker, as a citizen, I am appealing the ruling of the judge who said I'm supposed to be guilty of fraud, because it is in my heartfelt belief that I am innocent of any wrongdoing.

(1430)

Let me just briefly state my position. There is no doubt I bought a saddle with features that clearly identified me as the MLA for Arm River. The guidelines and directives of the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly as I truly understood them to be in 1988 were such that I did think it was okay to order parade equipment including advertising sash, breast collar, saddle, and saddle-bags identifying me as MLA for Arm River. I have never tried to deny that.

Over and over again I have to ask the question, if it was wrong for me to have asked the legislature to pay for the parade equipment and accessories, then why did they not tell me outright in 1988 — Mr. Muirhead, we cannot allow you to have this parade equipment, and this is why.

Then a few years later I find myself charged, hauled into the courts, and sentenced by a judge for fraud. To me it is a living nightmare for myself and my family and friends. Not only was I put on trial in a court of law, I've been put on trial by other politicians trying to score points by condemning me and making this the greatest, greatest trial of all my life.

Mr. Speaker, for the record. The Leader of the Opposition quoted in the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix* and Regina *Leader-Post* as saying that he gave me a chance to resign my seat. He never made such a statement to me in person, and I'm sure . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Order. The member puts the Speaker in a very, very difficult position when he imputes motives to other members of this House without a member having any opportunity to respond.

When leave is granted to a member to make a statement, it is always given to a member recognizing that he is an hon. member and will therefore not impute any motive to any member of this House. If the member continues to do that, I have no opportunity but to ask him to cease making a statement.

Mr. Muirhead: — Mr. Speaker, thank you. And I'll just jump a couple of paragraphs so that we'll leave that out.

Mr. Speaker — I'll just say this — I refused the offer of the Leader of the Opposition and I automatically became an independent member. I wish to state that I hold no resentment towards the member for Kindersley for what he did. He was taking his advice from other political advisers.

Mr. Speaker, all I ask the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Third Party is the same consideration that the Premier gave Mr. Koskie, and that is fairness.

The Speaker: — I hate to interrupt the member again, but the member simply cannot make statements referring to other members in this House. And if the member has a statement which affects him personally and he wishes to convey that to the members of this House, as a member of his constituency, I will accept that. And I think that's what the members have given him leave to do. And again would the member please refrain from referring to any other member in this House.

Mr. Muirhead: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My only avenue is to take my case to an appeal court and to the court of public opinion. Every day I pray that God will see me through this dark trial and that my legal appeal will find me innocent. It is my prayer that those who value the standards of our free and democratic society will respect my standing firm and fighting hard to prove that I am innocent.

Mr. Speaker, it is known that when a court finds a person guilty of an offence, legal experts will tell you that usually it is difficult to have an appeal court turn it around. In my case, if certain people would come forward with the truth, there would be no need for appeal.

In 1941 I was 10 years old. I rode in the Craik fair parade. In the 54 years since, I have rarely missed riding in that parade and have rode in many other parades in the Arm River constituency. Good people in my constituency encouraged me to identify myself in the parades as the MLA for Arm River. That is how the parade equipment and saddle came about, not as some sinister and dishonest plan to steal from the taxpayers, not as some crooked way for me to get free parade equipment and a saddle.

Mr. Speaker, if I were indeed guilty of what it is said I am guilty of, I would resign from this legislature because it would be the honourable thing to do.

When I was a boy, I read about Abraham Lincoln. By all accounts of history, he was a kind, decent, and forgiving man who had always shown compassion to those he believed to be innocent. Lincoln's words, "with malice towards none," should be a reminder to all of us that any of us could face a dark and trying time in their life. We must always hold firm to the belief that in the end, the truth will prevail.

Mr. Speaker, I've been encouraged by the many letters and phone calls and personal encounters I've had with the good people from my constituency and from all over Saskatchewan, telling me to stand firm and stand up for what I believe to be true.

I wish to thank the news media for their more than fair coverage over the last year. I also wish to thank all members of the Assembly and all employees in this Assembly who have extended to me their kindness. To each and every one, I say thank you.

The heartfelt support of my constituents has meant a great deal to me. They have told me not to give up. My faith in God and truth leads me to the same conclusion.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to make this final statement to the members in this Assembly and to the constituents of Arm River. I'm not sure — and only the Premier knows — when an election will be called, but if it happens to be soon and I don't get a chance to speak in this Assembly again, I want to say thank you to the people of Arm River for giving me a chance to serve them for nearly 17 years and also to serve in this Assembly.

For the many friends I have, and you people here are my friends — all past and present MLAs from all political sides of life — and I just want to say to each and every one of you, that let's all be friends. I want to be friends with everybody. I want no . . . Life is too short not to have friends, and we have many.

And I want to say, as we go into the next election, whenever it would be, if I don't get a chance to speak again, good luck to each and every one of you, and God bless you all.

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

Condemnation of Crow Benefit Abolition

Mr. Flavel: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to take issue with the federal government and their insensitive abolition of the Crow benefit, for their lack of common sense approach to the whole issue of rail line abandonment, and for their horrendous lack of foresight and lack of vision for the future of this country.

Mr. Speaker, at the end of my remarks, I will move the following motion:

That this Assembly condemn the federal government for its unfair agricultural and transportation cuts to western Canada compared to other regions; and in undermining the stability of Saskatchewan farmers by abolishing the Crow benefit, and accelerating its practice of rail line abandonment and deregulation; and its inability to provide a blueprint for transition.

Mr. Speaker, I speak from the heart not only as a politician but as a Saskatchewan farmer. There is no place left for us to go with this latest attack on our livelihood. The federal government abolished the Crow with one swift pen stroke, wiped out what once was not only a piece of history but something that was considered to be a right. Call it a right of passage, if you will, Mr. Speaker, but it was regarded as a right for western farmers.

We once had it to settle the West in the early days. Sure, it evolved — it had to — and became something slightly different, but its intention never changed, Mr. Speaker. Its intention was to help our farmers get their product to port, and in case the federal transportation and Agriculture ministers haven't noticed lately, we're in a land-locked province and getting our product to port is something of a challenge and it is very expensive.

With this latest move — and I call it the Liberal rural western revenge — our freight costs have taken an unprecedented leap. Why, Mr. Speaker? They're so high in some instances, the cost of moving grain and other commodities to a port is more than the actual cost of growing the grain in the first place.

There's something drastically wrong with that picture, Mr. Speaker. There is something drastically wrong with a federal Transport minister and a federal Minister of Agriculture who did not stop to think about the impact that this kind of move would have on farmers of Saskatchewan. We see the elimination of a historic benefit, one that was a part of Confederation, one that was part of our forefathers' vision of a nation from sea to shining sea.

Mr. Speaker, the natural trading patterns in North America very much run north and south. But we decided as Canadians to be a country that was tied together east to west by a national rail system. We had a national dream, and, Mr. Speaker, that has been destroyed by the unfairness of the federal budget.

Mr. Speaker, because the national trading patterns run north and south, at some time we as farmers will be shipping grain south. We have to. If the Canadian taxpayers are not prepared to support our farmers, then we as farmers are not going to carry the Canadian taxpayer. We will be forced to move our grain the cheapest and the fastest way that we can find, and that may include the Mississippi River system. A national transportation policy and the national transportation system is essential to the unity and the well-being of our great country. And we have seen this taken away at the expense of Saskatchewan farmers and Saskatchewan communities. And I might add that all of Canada will suffer because of this change.

Mr. Speaker, as of August 1 of this year, the farmers will pay about double the cost of moving their grain to the ports so they can move it to our customers overseas. You combine that with the cost of branch line abandonment, the increased costs of trucking, road maintenance costs, and it's easy to see that Saskatchewan was treated extremely unfair with this federal budget.

How was it done? Unfair? You bet. The western Canadian grain transportation Act or the Crow is completely gone, 100 per cent cut, and yet the dairy subsidies which mainly affect eastern Canada were only cut by 30 per cent. And I ask, Mr. Speaker, is that fair?

I have a major concern when I see a federal government cutting the Crow which will significantly change our transportation system. But what is just as concerning for me and the Government of Saskatchewan is the lack of a vision of what they, along with the interested groups, see for a vision as to what the future transportation system may look like.

Do they have a vision? I think not. Why was it done? Financially? Well somewhat. But I believe that maybe the member from Humboldt, as he addressed this House on February 28 of this year and he pointed out, here we have a Minister of Agriculture in the federal government in Ottawa, the same person who worked as a ministerial assistant to the former minister of Transportation in Ottawa, by the name of Otto Lang. Mr. Otto Lang was the minister that started the whole process of doing away with the Crow. Mr. Otto Lang started many years ago, and maybe for Mr. Goodale, this is the end of a mission accomplished.

Mr. Speaker, for heaven's sake, Mr. Goodale comes from this province, and he knows firsthand what it's like to grow a crop and to get it to market. He knows, and yet he stood by and watched the Crow as it was killed. He then went so far as to add insult to injury and say okay, let's give them one-time pay-out this year, a \$1.6 billion pay-out to compensate them.

Compensate? Mr. Speaker, this nowhere near compensates our farmers for their increased costs. They will be getting barely 18 to \$20 an acre while freight costs could double that.

He just doesn't get it. He just doesn't seem to see that it's not enough, it's not fair, it's not equitable, and it's not a solution to reducing the federal government debt. Reducing the debt on the backs of Saskatchewan farmers just won't cut it, Mr. Goodale.

Mr. Speaker, it's been pretty quiet out there. Our farmers haven't been saying a lot since this latest injustice. And why is that? I think it's because we're still in shock. We've been done in, so to speak, and we've been kicked once too often, that we just can't believe it's happened again on such a monumental scale.

Our farmers are in the depth of a severe depression. They have still got their fighting spirit but they have suffered a set-back. They still know that they can take things into their own hands and turn them around, and maybe diversify.

(1445)

But that's not the sole answer. That's not going to solve anything either because if we do diversify, and indeed we have extensively already, we will still need to get our products to market. And just because the federal Liberals eliminated the Crow doesn't mean that we've got any closer to the ports.

So what we have got here, Mr. Speaker, we've got a ridiculous situation where the federal Liberals have encouraged our farmers to diversify and then cut the rug out from under our producers. You might say it's just like the Charlie Brown comic, where Charlie comes to kick the football and Lucy pulls it away from him at the last moment, causing Charlie to land flat on his backside with the wind knocked out of him.

And that's what's happened to our farmers, Mr. Speaker. And what compounds the problem is the fact that there is no vision, no plan for things to come. They say they're going to reduce the deficit in a series of short-term plans. There is no long-term plan, and I believe there is no plan, period.

And that's pretty scary. A short-term solution never solved anything, except in the short term. There always has to be something else to step into play when the quick fix comes to an end. And right now all we have is a quick fix with nothing to back it up.

Those federal Liberals are a real piece of work, Mr. Speaker. They've devastated our livelihood, have no real plan to address the mess they've created, and they are now saying, we'll be flexible on how we distribute the pittance we're allowing you.

And while I'm on the subject, it isn't just the federal Liberals that are the problem. The provincial Liberals haven't been helpful since the Liberal budget came out either. We still don't know with any degree of certainty what side the Liberal Leader of the Third Party is on. I'm not certain she even knows what side of the issue she's on, except perhaps the side that sounds the best in the media.

We've seen far too many examples of the third party leader saying one thing in this House, going outside the House and saying something else to the media, then coming back in here and doing something entirely different than either what she said to the media or in the House.

It's enough to give one a headache, and it certainly gives one a great deal of pause when it comes to talking about credibility. Is the Leader of the Third Party credible when it comes to this issue? Mr. Speaker, I don't think so. In fact, I would venture to say that the third party leader doesn't really grasp the issue and its extremely negative impact on the way of life for this province.

If however she does understand the issue, and she has been quoted as saying our farmers got what they deserve, then this should give us cause for a great deal of concern. And it should also tell us that this person isn't able to take a set of principles and stand by them consistently.

I want to move on to another thought here, Mr. Speaker — rail

line abandonment. We knew that it was coming; we saw it; we fought it. But we did succeed in getting some prohibition orders imposed on lines. But with the elimination of the Crow, the doors are now wide open for the acceleration of rail line abandonment. And, Mr. Speaker, with the privatization of CN (Canadian National) looming, we know darn well that more lines are going to be abandoned, and abandoned so quickly that our heads will spin.

Why would any rail line keep a line open if they're not profitable. Well I think we all know the answer to that — they just won't do it. And they aren't about to wait until our farmers get their feet back on the ground either.

Mr. Speaker, we've got such a horrendous situation on our hands that I think that the federal and provincial Liberal politicians fail to see what they've really done. At least that's the way I see it.

I think they really think that through this logical conclusion, that they don't think about the impact the elimination of the Crow would have on our province. That they didn't really realize that our trading patterns would be drastically altered by this fiasco. That we might be forced to trade north and south rather than east and west. That our highways will deteriorate from the increase in heavy haulers. And that the federal government didn't provide for any transition plan during the inevitable adjustment period.

Mr. Speaker, they've stranded us. Or to be slightly more specific, they have jammed us between a rock and a hard place. And it's not going to be easy trying to sort out the ramifications of this mess. And most definitely, the Liberal Saskatchewan leader isn't going to be able to contribute anything worthwhile since she can't seem to decide where she stands on the issue, and many others for that matter.

No, Mr. Speaker, our Saskatchewan farmers will once again have to take the matters into their own hands and make adjustments and get on with their lives.

Our government will continue to talk to Mr. Goodale and point out what he's done is not equitable, is not fair, and to ask that he reconsider. I don't think he's going to help, because I think he's chosen, like the Saskatchewan Liberal leader, to turn a blind eye to this situation — to take the position, that's all you're getting, make do with it, and the consequences be darned.

Well I think the Saskatchewan Liberal leader is dreaming to be premier. I shudder at the thought of it. I shudder to think of what chaos would befall us. Mr. Speaker, it's not the Crow that should be abolished, it's the federal and provincial Liberal governments that should be abolished.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Biggar:

That this Assembly condemn the federal government for its unfair agricultural and transportation budget cuts to western Canada compared to other regions; and in undermining the stability of Saskatchewan farmers by abolishing the Crow benefit, and accelerating its

practice of rail line abandonment and deregulation; and its inability to provide a blueprint for transition.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Whitmore: — Mr. Speaker, this seems to be an issue that I guess is finally coming to an end if everything goes well in terms of what the federal Liberal government has done in terms of the Crow benefit.

Mr. Speaker, it's an issue that certainly I've been involved in for many years, long before I entered this Legislative Assembly, in terms of other active roles in farm organizations and the whole area of grain transportation, particularly the Crow benefit.

And after, as I say, I guess 15 years within this battle, battles won, battles lost — and one could say at times possibly the war is lost — is that everything that was talked about in terms of changing the Crow benefit and the problems it would create are about to happen. And I would like to talk about those repercussions.

But the question of the whole argument in terms of the grain transportation Crow benefit comes down to one major factor which underpins everything else. It is a transfer of the total cost of moving grain in this country onto the farmers. Simple, period. That's exactly what it is — a transfer of the cost.

Repercussions will mean increase in freight costs. We're unsure in terms of the variability of those freight cost differences. It ranges on the next crop year, August 1, from 14 to \$35 a tonne. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do believe that those ranges can be even that much greater. If one considers certain parts of this province that are a long ways away from main line tracks, those freight costs could be substantially higher.

Approximately four or five years ago, the senior grain transportation authority did a study on branch lines and talked about the change and the freight differences. They speculated a freight difference between Saskatoon and Meadow Lake within the range of \$60 a tonne for moving a commodity — \$60 a tonne.

So up front, farmers are faced with a direct transfer of costs and freight costs. But the underlying thing that takes place also in terms of the transfer of costs is in the area of branch lines, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Without a doubt, the grain handling system which has been going through evolution, which has been going through a transition, which farmers can adapt to, will now be put into the term that is used in the television program, warp speed. The transition that will take place in the grain handling system will be done at warp speed in the next five years.

And when one talks about branch line abandonment and what rail lines will exist by the year 2000 or 2010, because under this system, as the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood outlined, what will be profitable will determine what will be here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I assure you that those farmers who will benefit the most in terms of this are only those who live very close to main line tracks.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, let there be no doubt about this.

Where those main line tracks are . . . because I think there is a fallacy that where farmers believe they'll be hauling grain. There are only the main line tracks that run the community of Regina, CNCP (Canadian National and Canadian Pacific); the main line tracks that run through Saskatoon, CNCP; one branching off to Calgary, a CN track; and a CN track going off to Edmonton.

We're talking about the possibility of four rail tracks in the province of Saskatchewan. We are talking distances of moving grain 150 miles to those rail tracks. People will say, well this won't happen; there'll be protection there. There will be safeguards to protect the producers.

Not under the federal government, Liberal government's proposal. This proposal goes to full commercial rates. This proposal goes to full deregulation of the system. And that is the greatest attack on the farming community in this province — it's the move to deregulation. There will be no protection for farmers — absolutely none.

All we have to do is look south to see the examples of what deregulation does. In the early '80s, deregulation took place in the Dakotas and in Montana — massive closure of branch lines, massive changes in terms of the grain handling system.

And I might add, even those communities that are on branch lines are not secure because the system will consolidate to such a degree that these points will be 50, 60, 70, maybe 100 miles apart — again increasing the costs that are going on.

Farmers will be faced with tough decisions: whether they should continue farming, particularly those that are close to retirement; or trying to grow different crops by which they can take advantage of the system. Because the other thing that this Bill does in terms of the changes to the Crow system, it changes cropping practices. Crops that are low in price but high in volume become worthless to export. They are almost worthless to move out of the province. And there's only a limited amount of value added that you can do in respect to barley and oats that I speak of.

(1500)

Now some have said there will be an increase in livestock production with the change that is coming. The former Progressive Conservative government conducted a panel to study such things, producer panel, and they suggested, particularly in Saskatchewan, there would be no changes to the cattle and hog herd — minimal changes.

So farmers are going to recognize that barley and oats are not the crops to grow. They'll be going into other crops. Farmers in this province are very adaptable. But don't think tomorrow that the cattle herd's going to increase, because it's not. It takes time and it will not increase to that degree.

The other thing that takes place that many experts are saying, land values are going to drop. And we've just gone through a time in history in Saskatchewan where land values dropped significantly and are just starting to recover. Equities by farmers are starting to increase, but that's been taken away.

Every expert says land values will drop the farther you are from the main railway grain handling system. Land values will drop that much more. So that really poses a problem to people that are in those fringe areas throughout the province that are a long ways away from the main line tracks.

And the last thing that this legislation does is determine that the payment go to producers. We now see clearly the problem of making the payment to producers. Who should get it? Landlords, banks, government institutions, or tenants? Should tenants get it, or actual producers?

This argument had been going on for years. Everybody said pay it to producers. But none of the groups ever determined where it should go because they saw the problems also.

We now see the problem of paying the producers. We are seeing this fight in terms of farmers and tenants determining who should get it and who will benefit from it.

In the end, Mr. Deputy Speaker, no one will benefit, no one will benefit from the meagre \$1.6 billion. It failed to recognize the size of payment that was needed, but it also emphasized the whole difficulty of having a payment system to producers.

Mr. Speaker, I've heard the argument made that offers have been put on the table that at one point in time it was \$7 billion, it was \$4 billion. Let me assure you that every federal government was unable to meet this requirement.

So Mr. Speaker, I will be clearly supporting this resolution and thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Devine: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise, Mr. Speaker, to speak to this motion. And at the end of my comments I will be making an amendment to the motion, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Because frankly, listening to the NDP talk about saving rural Saskatchewan is nothing short of pathetic, given their track record and given their rhetoric over the past few years. And if they would just have the patience to listen to the truth, perhaps they might get a little bit of humility in defending rural people.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, isn't it interesting that when we talk about the abandonment of the Crow rate and the NDP stand in the legislature and say how much this really bothers them, that you don't see any rallies, you don't see any rural support, you don't see any people standing up and fighting for the cause of rural Saskatchewan, you don't see any organizations taking place, led by the NDP or led by their organizations or led by their friends. What's happened?

This is the fight of the life. The NDP said that this is it, this is entirely their cause, to be elected in Saskatchewan or any place else, was to defend rural Saskatchewan against the Crow. And we don't hear a peep in rural Saskatchewan. Not a peep. And the reason, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that they have cried wolf once too many times.

An Hon. Member: — Grant, go home.

Mr. Devine: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, listen to them. The hypocrisy of the NDP standing up in 1995, saying that they believe in rural Saskatchewan and rural Canada, is so evident that you can hardly have enough members in the House to support them, let alone people across Saskatchewan. And not one person would come to an NDP rally to say, I will vote NDP to stick up for rural Saskatchewan. Nobody would. Nobody would. It's pathetic.

An Hon. Member: — You have no credibility in this province.

Mr. Devine: — Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, listen to them chirp from their seats. They'll have lots of chances to speak, but they can't stand the facts. The facts are that the NDP have cried wolf too often, have let people down, and particularly rural people.

After the election, Mr. Speaker, where they promised that they would have a cost of production, they'd have more money for people in towns and villages for health and hospitals and roads and jobs and they would really stick up for senior citizens in rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and they would stick up for their crop insurance, guess what happened? The NDP government of the day brought upon, as the member mentioned, the revenge, the political revenge on rural Saskatchewan like we have never seen. And now they're trying to say, oh but we really didn't mean it, it's all the Liberal's fault.

Just look at the record on rural Saskatchewan by the NDP and why nobody would come to an NDP rally to stick up for rural Saskatchewan. Nobody would ever say yes, I believe the NDP would be the best to look after farmers or the best to look after the Crow or the best to look after rural lifestyle. They don't believe that. They don't believe that at all.

Number one, when they talked about helping rural people, did they mention they were going to open hospitals and build them? Yes, they did. And the truth is they did the opposite, and rural people know that.

So you go to your communities. Have you opened any new hospitals recently? Have you brought in more health care to rural Saskatchewan? Have you closed 52 hospitals? Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the public knows and the seniors know and the families know.

Have you offloaded taxes and costs onto rural municipalities? Absolutely. Hundreds of millions of dollars of local taxes have gone up. And you can just go back and look at your own land values and look at the taxes there, and the NDP have caused that offloading, unbelievable offloading to rural people.

School boards, school boards — school boards have to raise taxes because of the offloading because of the cut-backs and the NDP say no, we're here to defend rural Saskatchewan.

And crop insurance . . . Mr. Deputy Speaker, do you think maybe they could have their turn speak and we can take turns in the legislature? Just ask them to talk about, when they get on

their feet, about GRIP (gross revenue insurance program) and about crop insurance.

People had the opportunity to have protection. I can recall, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we would bring a billion dollars a year from Ottawa to Saskatchewan alone to help farmers and the NDP would say, but we need more, we need more from the feds. It's not enough. And they would go and try to rally people and say we need more coming to Saskatchewan than a billion dollars a year.

And they said, we would do better. That's what the NDP said. We will protect your crop insurance. We'll give you the cost of production and we'll get billions and billions and billions from Ottawa. That's what they said. That's what they campaigned on.

And guess what happened, Mr. Deputy Speaker? They not only didn't get billions, they took away hundreds of millions of dollars from Saskatchewan farmers. The very crop insurance program people depended upon, the NDP members took them away — \$189 million that they took out of the pockets of people on farms, and they said oh, but we have to worry about the Crow and we have to worry about this. They didn't care about farmers at all. They don't care one dime about farmers.

Look at the provincial agriculture budget, look at the crop insurance budget, look at the GRIP budget, roads, hospitals, schools. Saskatchewan Pension Plan for senior citizens, particularly rural women — they cancel it; wipe it right out.

The NDP in the province of Saskatchewan have zero credibility when it comes to defending farmers. They told farmers a falsehood. They said, believe in the NDP and we'll be there to protect you. We'll protect your GRIP and we'll protect your crop insurance, we'll protect your freight rates, we'll protect your communities.

And do you know what the NDP did? They gave farmers a stab in the back. They took away crop insurance and they took away all their support mechanisms, and they over and over and over again said to those members, don't trust other political parties; you can only trust the NDP.

Well if you go across rural Saskatchewan today, I'll tell you the public will sing a different song. They'll say, I don't trust the NDP because they have cried wolf so many times to get us to vote NDP. They've said so many times if you don't vote NDP it will all go away. And now we find out the very people that caused it to go away are those newly elected NDP members in this session of the legislature.

I can remember, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when the NDP said, well we're against deregulation. The NDP said, we're against diversification. The NDP says they're against terminals. The NDP are against variable rates. The NDP are against free trade. The NDP are against equity and share offerings and privatization. And the NDP said, oh we're against banks and we're against multinationals. They have talked so many times out of both sides of their mouth that the public doesn't know what to believe about the NDP.

What does the NDP today believe about privatization? What do

they believe? Is it good or bad? Speak up. Well a few seconds ago, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they wanted to tell everybody what they believe. What do they believe about privatization? What do they believe about privatization? Speak up. What do they think about that?

Well at one time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this was a holy . . . unholy sin to talk about equity and share offerings and privatization. And they're mum now. Not a word out of them. What is it?

Well guess what. The local co-op is going to be privatized. Whoops, moving into the 21st century, and the NDP are going to rise and support it. And the public's just shaking their heads, well I thought that was something evil like banks or like diversification or like deregulation or like terminals or other things.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, let me say this. Let me say this. The reason for the wreck in agriculture coming from the federal government is in good part because of the provincial NDP which have caused the problem to start with. They wholesale gave up on Saskatchewan. And the federal Liberals say, I can give up on it as well because nobody's going to complain in Saskatchewan because nobody believes the NDP or the Government of Saskatchewan when it comes to agriculture. Nobody believes them.

There should have been \$7.2 billion coming to this part of the country as a result of the Crow and the Crow benefit. And it is not coming here because of the NDP and because of their cooperation and there's conniving with the provincial Liberal government.

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. The member's time has elapsed.

Mr. Devine: — May I make an amendment?

The Deputy Speaker: — No. Only during the 10 minutes that's allowed.

Mr. Devine: — By leave, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

The Deputy Speaker: — By leave then. Is leave granted for the member to move an amendment?

Leave granted.

Mr. Devine: — Thank you. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Morse:

That all the words after the word "condemned" be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

both the provincial and the federal government for unfair agriculture budget cuts adversely affecting the province of Saskatchewan, more specifically the provincial government for undermining the stability of Saskatchewan farmers by cancelling thousands of GRIP contracts and eliminating support to Saskatchewan's

agriculture sector, and the federal government for abolishing the Crow benefit without proper compensation and concise plans, which will lead to rail line abandonment, low land values, and increased cost to Saskatchewan producers.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — Why is the member for Shaunavon on his feet?

Mr. McPherson: — Point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — What is your point of order?

Mr. McPherson: — Well was there not a need for unanimous support on whether the member could bring forward the amendment?

The Deputy Speaker: — I asked for leave and I didn't hear anyone say no. I saw the member was preoccupied with other items; I didn't hear the member say no. It was only after I had asked for leave and I didn't hear any no's that the member then raised a question of order.

I find this is in order. The debate continues. The amendment is in order and the debate continues concurrent on the amendment and the main motion.

(1515)

Mr. Martens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to today, enter the debate on this discussion on the rationalization of the rail system as it relates to the discussion about the Crow.

We have talked at considerable length over the last few weeks after the federal budget came down. We've talked about various kinds of things that impact into the province of Saskatchewan, and I would say, first of all, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the debate on the demise of the Crow rate will be fairly extensive over the next few months — and perhaps even a few years — as we begin to adjust ourselves to the impact of what's going to happen.

The first item that I believe of significance in this discussion . . . and I believe we have to talk about certain areas that are going to impact in Saskatchewan. We have to talk about, first of all, is the railroad going to rationalize itself over the next two or three years in a way that's going to be constructive?

I'm going to try to obligate some of the people in the government side of the House; however, I think that the rationalization of the railroad is going to take place over the next two or three years in a way that is going to seriously impact in various communities across Saskatchewan.

I am told that the majority of the rail lines that deal with the steel that runs the rails is most represented in the CN lines. And the CN lines in Saskatchewan are generally in the northern part of Saskatchewan. Those rail lines will have the most devastating effect . . . or the Crow rate will have the most

devastating effect on those rail lines.

The second thing that we have to talk about I believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is how will this impact in rates being adjusted and set, so that the people of the province of Saskatchewan who are going to have increased costs will have the lowest costs made available to them in dealing with the cost of moving grain to port? And that is going to have to be set at some point in time by someone. Either the National Transportation Agency is going to have to regulate the grain and the rates, or somebody is going to have to do it, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That is a very serious issue that has to be dealt with.

The third thing that I believe we have to identify is those costs to rural communities across Saskatchewan. I just read in the paper today, the headline said: most cities will not be affected by changes to the Crow. And I really think, Mr. Speaker, that that is a serious, serious problem that exists in Saskatchewan because urban centres think they're not going to be impacted. But \$300 million less income in a year in agriculture, in this province, are going to significantly impact in urban centres.

Large urban centres are going to be very seriously impacted. In the city of Regina, for example, 80 per cent of all the business in Regina is conducted in rural Saskatchewan. Eighty per cent of the businesses in Regina are in some way going to be impacted negatively by a reduced volume of income by rural people. Rural agriculture is going to be that much less viable and therefore, Mr. Speaker, the things that rural people will buy is going to be significantly reduced.

And that is going to be a significant community cost; whether it's a large urban centre, whether it's a small urban centre, the community costs are going to be felt throughout Saskatchewan.

The elevator system in the province of Saskatchewan is also going to have to adjust itself. There are about 500 elevators in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and that number is going to be reduced significantly as these rail lines are abandoned in view of what the federal government has done.

Mr. Speaker, the federal government has unilaterally made a decision to cut the cost. What they have, I believe, not done anything about is setting up a process where the elimination of these benefits can be handled by the people of western Canada.

Mr. Speaker, there are a whole lot of us who have argued in the past about paying the producer. We never, ever said that you reduce the volume of dollars coming to western Canada — which is what happened with the federal Liberal government — but we have always said, pay the producer so that we have a level playing-field with all of the benefits being spread out across western Canada, and not only the grain side of agriculture receiving the benefits.

Mr. Speaker, if they had paid the producer to start with, the benefits would have accrued to everyone.

Another thing we're going to have to deal with in how we handle this is the road costs. Whether it's the highways, whether it's the municipal roads, these are going to be extremely important to the delivery of grain when we have to haul. Rather

than 10 miles or 8 miles or 20 miles, it's going to be 60 and 90 and 100 miles that this grain is going to have to move. Those are also things that are going to have to be addressed.

Mr. Speaker, another area that is going to impact and I think it has to be looked at, it is that those people in the southern part of this province are going to have to have options that deal with the U.S. (United States). If we're not going to be allowed to move grain into the U.S., we are going to be seriously curtailed by the options that are available to us.

Mr. Speaker, there are many things that we have to think about — the economic opportunities. Feature \$300 million going out of the farming sector, 10 per cent of the gross income is going to be lost by agriculture. And if any other sector in Saskatchewan would lose 10 per cent of its benefits and take 10 per cent off of its viability line, there would be serious repercussions throughout Saskatchewan in every facet that it would impact.

And that's what's happened on the grain side in agriculture. Between 8 and 10 per cent of the people's livelihood is going to be taken away.

Another item that I think that has to be included in this discussion, Mr. Speaker, and it hasn't appeared anywhere, and I would say that this government is equally responsible for the problems that we have with this discussion because they haven't given to the federal government any kind of outline of what they should do. They haven't given any kind of a rationalization of the impact — they haven't said to anybody.

I just recently got a letter saying that the minister of transport had sent a copy of some of the things to the federal Minister of Transport. What it clearly indicates to me, Mr. Speaker, is that there is a serious shortage, a serious shortage on any kind of knowledgeable representation by this government to the federal government on what the impact in Saskatchewan is going to be.

And that, Mr. Speaker, is why we bring forward this amendment. This amendment identifies all of the aspects of the concerns that we have as opposition party, telling the government you need to address the shortfall in agriculture in many ways.

You haven't done that. In fact you let it get away on you. You deliberately gave back to the federal government \$300 million that was their share in the premium paid by them in the GRIP program. You took \$180 million back into your budget so you could balance the books. And what did the farmers get out of it in Saskatchewan?

Alberta and Manitoba's farmers got the benefits of all this national program, but did the Saskatchewan farmers get that \$300 million? No, Mr. Speaker, they did not. And that to me is where the federal government began to see. They began to see that we can reduce the value of the Crow to the people of Saskatchewan and western Canada because it's been led by an attack on agriculture by this government.

And that's what our amendment says, Mr. Speaker, and that's

why it's important for us to clearly understand that the value of the Crow is only a part of what the total loss to agriculture is.

Three hundred million dollars lost to the economy in Saskatchewan in a way that is negative to agriculture, Mr. Speaker, and the grain producers are going to be negatively impacted. These remarks, Mr. Speaker, are important in this discussion, and they need to be addressed as a part of the value that the transportation reduction in payment is going to be — \$300 million loss on an annual basis to the province of Saskatchewan. And that is extended to the other provinces as well. And that would be a loss in the neighbourhood, for this year, of 560 million.

And, Mr. Speaker, if we go back in history, it was a loss of \$700 million. And that is even more serious to the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. The member's time has elapsed.

Mr. McPherson: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm pleased to stand up and speak today on the motion or the amendment to the motion. But, you know, there's some serious . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order, order.

Mr. McPherson: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm pleased to stand up and speak to the amended motion today, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But, you know, there's some serious problems when I look at the motions and the amendments to the motions that continuously come forward from the governing party and the official opposition, in the sense that everything they do is coming out condemning someone.

And you know, when we take a look at where the people's minds are today, they know full well that we are really all Canadians, and we are really all in a serious situation, not only in this province. I mean the debts of this province rung up by the former Conservative government, well they were unforgivable, extremely high. And the people of the province are doing what they feel, I guess, what they felt were very necessary things. And of course the government of the day took it far beyond with taxation and really put the province into a negative spin.

But you know, when I hear some of the arguments coming forward about how we've got to continuously condemn the federal government, this is the federal government that they are forever reaching out to and say, help us and save us because we've made some mistakes. They've made some mistakes, and they want now somebody, somebody who's trying to clean up the finances of Canada as a whole because of Conservative administrations again.

But the fact of the matter is these people aren't prepared to work with anybody. They're far more interested, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in trying to find an election issue in the next couple months because the problem that they're having is that they are pretty much issue free because the people are so far ahead of them.

That is why, Mr. Deputy Speaker, at the end of my remarks, I will be moving an amendment to the amended motion, and I think putting perhaps this in a better context of where the people of the province of Saskatchewan would like to see their elected representatives go. They want everyone working hand in hand, working for the benefit of not only the people of Saskatchewan, other provinces in fact, but as Canada because there's only one taxpayer, that it's all . . . this whole thing is for everyone at the end of the day. And that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is why I think that there's a better way to approach this than for always to be condemning somebody for something.

And in fact when we take a look at this particular government's own actions, as the member for Morse had just talked about minutes ago, the fact of the matter is there you have a provincial government who gave up on rural Saskatchewan in such a way . . . gave up on the farmers entirely. In fact when we had, as the member from Morse stated, 2 to \$300 million of money on the table from the federal government, and the government of the day gave it up. They chose not to leave their amount of money into the pot, but they decided that they wouldn't make an investment in Saskatchewan farmers. They wouldn't make an investment in agriculture in this province. In fact they'd forgo that money. And you know, when you look at it, even on the smaller scale . . . but I think it really means the same thing.

I was at a meeting last Friday evening in the community of Consul. And we hear all levels of governments right across Canada, but especially right here in Saskatchewan — right here in Saskatchewan where they've come out with a glossy booklet, Ag 2000 — how we've got to get away from being a wheat dependent economy and in fact start to diversify. Right? So now we hear what they have to say, and we can see it in expensive, very expensive glossy literature, but what does it . . . you know, what are the actions at the end of the day?

Well if we take a look at just in the community of Consul where they had a project which was announced a few years ago, a community of Consul where a few years ago there was a dam that was announced, the Battle Creek reservoir. And this is a great example, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of where a government could put its words to action, but they chose firstly, once they're elected in 1991, to put a halt to the project.

(1530)

And right away, they're going to back up and say well, we've got some environmental concerns, so we can't go ahead with this even though the people down there want some diversification for their area. Move into alfalfa, into more of the beef industry, try and get away from the dependency on wheat crops and such, and yet what are we seeing? Even on this scale, on this project, they're pulling away.

The federal money, as I found out at a meeting in Consul the other night, is on the table until the end of March. But what are these people prepared to do? Nothing. They're saying that it can't go ahead because of some environmental concerns, but it was Sask Environment that says, well we can't go ahead because the provincial government decided to pull the money

off the table. So it's a real catch 22.

And I know that the minister in charge . . . he sits there smiling about it. The fact of the matter is he's not fooling anyone out in Consul, Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because they know that deep down that these people are not for diversification. They're not for rural Saskatchewan moving ahead. They want everyone to move into the cities, but they're forgoing a lot of federal dollars that they can now stand up and complain that the federal government isn't supporting . . . supporting what? You people keep giving up the money.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think it's disappointing when we see this government say one thing, bring in motions that are condemning, and they want more and more. But yet when it really comes down to the crunch, they never pull through for the farmers. They never pull through for rural Saskatchewan.

But you know when we talked about the issue that was first brought up in this motion as far as the changes in the transportation subsidies, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and they, right after the federal budget, were standing up and saying well, we were so surprised; we didn't realize this was coming down.

Well you know who is surprised? Everyone else in the province perhaps, other than them. And I'll tell you why. We've got the *Leader-Post* articles dating back to April 8, 1994. And in fact the headline is: GATT will impact Crow. Cost of moving grain can be reduced. And right here, it says the GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) . . . and this is the international trade rules which they have known for quite some time were coming down and in fact that changes in agriculture subsidies and transportation subsidies had to be changed by this July. And they feel it's fine just to sit back and say, well yes, but we can ignore that because for political reasons . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. The member's time has elapsed. It's now time for question and comments.

I stand to apologize to the member and to the House. The clock, I am informed, started not at 75 minutes but at 65 minutes, so the member has another 2 minutes and 21 seconds.

Mr. McPherson: — Well thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and in the event that I do get cut off, I'll move my amendment to the amended motion at this time:

That all the words after "that" be deleted, and the following substituted:

this Assembly acknowledge that the elimination of the Crow benefit was inevitable as a result of the GATT agreement; and therefore that this Assembly work with the federal government in the promotion of diversification and value added processing.

And that will be seconded by the member from Regina North West, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And the reason for this amendment, Mr. Deputy Speaker . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — As I understand it, the member has moved his amendment to the amendment.

I have to declare that the amendment moved by the member for Shaunavon is out of order. As I read the amendment . . . or the proposed amendment to the amendment, it is clear that what he is trying to do is move an amendment to the main motion, but because there is an amendment on the floor made by the member for Estevan, any amendment made by him or others must be relevant to the amendment that is on the floor, and this amendment is not relevant to that amendment.

The member from Shaunavon, why is he on his feet?

Mr. McPherson: — A point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. Order.

Mr. McPherson: — Both the amendment and the amendment that I brought in were both dealing with the transportation subsidies. How . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — I've ruled on the amendment. The member should not question the Chair.

Mr. Upshall: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, again I rise to take part in this debate on a bit of a note of sadness — sadness for the farm economy, the provincial economy, although I know the resilience that's out in rural Saskatchewan. I know farmers will take up this challenge, yet another challenge to them, and carry on through it.

Mr. Speaker, I think the important point here that we're dealing with in this motion, is the unfairness of the agricultural cuts, number one. We're dealing with the accelerated practice of rail line abandonment, abolishing the Crow rate, basically the whole agricultural package.

Mr. Speaker, I think over the last four years since 1991-92 the cuts to agriculture across Canada have gone something like this. Now remembering '91-92 was the end of the Conservative era, right through into a new Liberal era where cuts to agriculture federally to Quebec have been about 22 per cent, to Ontario about 30 per cent, and to Saskatchewan about 60 per cent. A continuation, Mr. Speaker, of the offloading and undermining of agriculture support from the federal government over the last four years.

And, Mr. Speaker, that speaks for itself, despite the fact that the Liberal leader in Saskatchewan says that the cuts were fair across the country.

Now the member for Thunder Creek may want to get into the debate. I'm not sure. I could leave him a minute or so to tell us everything he knows, but I don't know that I'll do that.

We have a situation, Mr. Speaker, that I want to explain to the members opposite, and especially to the Leader of Liberal Party. Because what's happened in Saskatchewan today with the demise of the Crow benefit reminds me of someone . . . if you've ever grown up on a farm and had chickens, if you ever

threw a bunch of breadcrumbs down on the chicken yard.

And that's what the federal Liberal government has done to the farmers of Saskatchewan. They've thrown the breadcrumbs down and everybody is there because they desperately want to get a part of this action. And it's a scramble for the crumbs.

They threw the breadcrumbs down with no organization, no forward thought about how to organize the distribution of the money from the Crow benefit, trying to blame the farmers, the farm organizations, and indeed the provincial government. Sort of saying, well it's up to you. I mean, the onus is on you. You better get yourselves organized to figure this out. That is an unfair position to put them in.

So, Mr. Speaker, think of this. You've got a federal government who . . . a federal Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Goodale, who wasn't strong enough — for the lack of stronger words I might use — wasn't strong enough to maintain a fair level of compensation for Saskatchewan farmers. Okay. So the Crow's gone; we get an inadequate pay-out to replace it over a short period of time. That's bad enough.

But then just think in the last few days, Mr. Speaker, of what's happened with the CN lockouts/potential strike. We see again the federal Minister of Agriculture not only not strong enough to take a position to ensure that the farmers of this province are not financially affected and the economy of this province is affected; he's compounding the farm problem by not taking a position on this strike/lockout.

So he's weak with the Crow benefit pay-out and he's compounding the farmers' problem by not being strong enough to say to the railroads, the managers and the unions, that this will not happen; we can't afford a strike.

Throw one more little piece into this puzzle, Mr. Speaker. And the reason I say he's compounded the problem is because the farmers in this crop year, the last crop year that the Crow benefit is available to them . . . and I have the schedule here, Mr. Speaker, the tentative schedule of rates. Before I finish that I'll give you a little example.

My point of Young, the rate is going to basically . . . it will just a little bit more than double. Let's take Bredenbury — from \$11.35 to \$21.59 — \$10 a tonne; almost double.

So what are the farmers' reaction? They want to get as much of their crop into the system, two-port position this year, so that they can gain the benefit of the present Crow.

So what's Mr. Goodale and the Liberals done? By not taking a strong position on the strike and lockout that has started and could escalate, they are further jeopardizing farmers' ability to grasp or complete the income from last year by being able to access the Crow.

So if they fail . . . and I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House have made representation to CN, written a letter to CP, to the unions of the rail, to the west coast, to the west coast management authority saying, do everything you can to prevent

this strike. Everything you can.

I would challenge the Conservative Party. Our minister, in the House today, it was question period, said he would be willing to table that. I would challenge the Conservative Party to table theirs; I'll challenge the Liberals to table theirs. Thank you.

The Speaker: — Order. Under Rule 16, the 65 minutes of time has lapsed and according to the rule there now will be a maximum of 10-minute question and answer if members wish to participate in that. So we were opening to questions and answers now.

Mr. Upshall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for . . . two questions, I will ask them one at a time.

First of all, as I said in my comments that our minister has been willing and made it public that we're willing to table our representations we've made on behalf of the province and farmers to ensure that the strike, this lockout, does not continue.

I'd like to ask the member for Shaunavon if he would . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . yes, the Liberal member from Shaunavon or any of his colleagues over there, if he would be willing to stand in this House now and agree to table all the correspondence they have had with the federal minister, the CNCP, the labour unions, to ensure that we're working together on this issue and to ensure that the farmers in this province won't be affected by this strike.

I'd ask the member if he might do that.

The Speaker: — I'll recognize the next question.

(1545)

Mr. Upshall: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess there's no answer to that.

The second question I would ask is if the member from Morse, on behalf of his caucus, would like to table today or at some convenient time correspondence they might have with CNCP, the labour unions involved, the Prime Minister or the Minister of Agriculture federally, to show that their support for the farmers is the same as what ours is in trying to avert any action that might deny farmers some monies.

Mr. Martens: — The member for Thunder Creek will be doing that at his earliest convenience, and he will be doing that representation to the various agencies, because as his critic responsibility he will be doing that. He has made some representation to the unions already in discussion with them, members of the union, and he will be doing that later on.

The Speaker: — I see no further questions.

So that members have it clear in the future, if you use up your 65 minutes of debate, then there is no vote because you have used up all your time. The last time we had . . . last week we had a vote on it, or the week before we had a vote on it because members allowed themselves the extra time or the 65 minutes.

But other than that, we can't have a vote on it. But there is a maximum 10-minute question period.

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, because of the importance of this issue, I would ask for leave for a vote to be called so that this issue could be referred to the House of Commons because it's probably one of the most important issues we will deal with in this session. And I think the members of the Assembly would like there to be a vote so we could forward it to our colleagues in the federal government. And therefore I would ask for leave that a vote be held.

The Speaker: — Leave granted? Order, order. Does the member want to speak to that point of order?

Mr. Neudorf: — Yes, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much, Speaker. I want to concur with the Government House Leader. I think when we spend this amount of the legislature's time on significant issues like this, I think it behoves us to come to some kind of decision. I think we should do this on a regular basis and when we have these debates that a decision is reached, Mr. Speaker. And I would certainly say to the Government House Leader, the official opposition gives leave.

The Speaker: — I think Beauchesne's is very clear on this. When members . . . the House is allowed certainly to do whatever they so wish, but that does not set a precedent, if members do it by leave. And it should be noted that this is not a precedent.

I would suggest to members in the future, if they do want to have a vote, that they should allow themselves sufficient time in the 65 minutes to do so. Leave has been granted, and the vote will be taken.

Leave granted.

The division bells rang from 3:50 p.m. until 4 p.m.

Amendment negated on the following recorded division.

Yeas

| | | |
|---------|----------|---------|
| Swenson | Neudorf | Martens |
| Goohsen | Muirhead | |

— 5

Nays

| | | |
|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| Van Mulligen | Thompson | Lingenfelter |
| Shillington | Anguish | Johnson |
| Goulet | Lautermilch | Kowalsky |
| Mitchell | Penner | Upshall |
| Hagel | Lorje | Teichrob |
| Pringle | Cline | Murray |
| Hamilton | Draper | Whitmore |
| Sonntag | Flavel | Langford |
| Scott | Kujawa | Stanger |
| Knezacek | Harper | Keeping |
| Carlson | | |

— 31

The Speaker: — Order, order. I think the Speaker was one step ahead of you people. . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Order, order. I agree with the member who said that I always am a step ahead of you. But the Speaker was a little bit ahead. There was only a recorded vote asked on the amendment. So the vote will now be on the motion, the original motion.

The division bells rang from 4:04 p.m. until 4:20 p.m.

Motion agreed to on the following recorded division.

Yeas

| | | |
|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| Van Mulligen | Thompson | Lingenfelter |
| Shillington | Anguish | Simard |
| Johnson | Lautermilch | Kowalsky |
| Mitchell | Penner | Upshall |
| Hagel | Lorje | Teichrob |
| Pringle | Cline | Murray |
| Hamilton | Draper | Whitmore |
| Sonntag | Flavel | Langford |
| Scott | Kujawa | Stanger |
| Knezacek | Harper | Keeping |
| Carlson | Devine | Swenson |
| Neudorf | Martens | Goohsen |
| Britton | | |

— 37

Nays

— Nil

The Speaker: — What's the member's point of order?

Mr. Hagel: — I appreciate that I'm not able to raise a point of order during the conduct of a vote. The point of order that I raise is to ask whether it is permissible to take the vote before time has expired, if there is no one from the Liberal caucus who is present to . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order, order. Order, order! The member's point of order is not well taken.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Effects of Federal Government on Economy of Western Canada

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure today to rise in this Assembly and speak on behalf of Saskatchewan agriculture in the province as a whole, and I will be moving a motion, Mr. Speaker, and I would read that into the record now and move it at the end of my remarks. And I'm going to move, Mr. Speaker, seconded by the member from Morse:

That this Assembly urge the provincial government to press the federal government for fairness to western Canadian people in light of the federal government's minimal pay-out of the Crow benefit, \$7 billion in cuts to health care, and failing to defend western Canadian producers against railway strikes that are hindering the transportation of grain to export and therefore

significantly increasing cost to producers to transport their grain.

Mr. Speaker, with everything that has happened in the last few months, certainly I think western Canadians are wondering what in the world this federal Liberal government that we've been blessed with in this country is really up to. You know they had a mandate, Mr. Speaker, a massive mandate given by the people of Canada just a short while ago to get on with the job of making this country more productive, to use trade, to use the tools available to allow western Canadians in particular to reach out and seek out new markets, to reach out and develop our economy in such a way that we all would contribute to the national fabric of our country in a very significant way.

We all understand the issues surrounding debt and deficit, Mr. Speaker. We're all taxpayers, and we like to think that when issues surrounding fairness to the taxpayers of this country arise that they will be dealt with in an even-handed manner. And certainly what we've seen transpire in the last few weeks is not fairness, and it is not even-handed.

Mr. Speaker, the changes to the method of payment are something that we in this party have supported for a long time because we saw that as a way of enhancing the agriculture and industrial base of this province and indeed western Canada, that that historic right that western Canadians have had surrounding the issues of transportation would then be passed on to individuals. And those individuals — not government, not railroads, and not unions — would have the ability to direct their own destiny.

Unfortunately, Mr. Minister, what we're seeing is a pittance directed at western Canada. And all of those other entities — railways, unions, and government — will continue to take away the ability of individuals in our society in western Canada to contribute to the fabric of their provinces and to their national government. And we think, Mr. Speaker, that not only is it unjust, unfair, but it is going to set this country back decades because we will not have the tools available to develop ourselves as we know we can.

The newspapers, Mr. Speaker, are full of editorials and articles saying that we are now in jeopardy of losing — losing to other countries, losing to other trading blocs, and indeed pitting province against province to try and sort our way out of this mess.

I see in today's paper where the potash people are looking to market their potash out of the American port of Portland because they have no faith in the transportation system in western Canada — a transportation system that I say to you is not going to be rationally modernized and the savings passed on to the producers of the various commodities in this country, but one which will now be chipped away at in a haphazard manner.

And instead of curing the problem, which a payment of some \$7.2 billion over five to ten years would have done, we are now going to have probably wholesale abandonment taking place. We will have grain companies picking the spots instead of

producers, and we will have our railroads simply passing on exorbitant fees to the grain and oil-seed producers of western Canada.

And it is no wonder, Mr. Speaker, when others contemplate following the lead of the potash producers in this country. And we know that coal, sulphur, all of the bulk commodities, are going to have to look outside of Canada in order to do what they need to do to diversify and grow.

We are faced with the fact today, Mr. Speaker, as we speak, that there are some 3,200 railway, CP Railway workers, now in a strike lockout position. And I wouldn't want anyone in this Assembly to say that we lay the blame entirely at the feet of the railway unions. These are working men and women who have been without a contract in some cases for 18 months, and that is simply unacceptable.

This is, I am told, the fourteenth work stoppage in our transportation system in the last 15 years or so. Something is fundamentally wrong, Mr. Speaker, when we have this happen time and time again, and provinces like Saskatchewan, that are wholly dependent on the export of goods and materials for their very livelihood, are blocked at every opportunity because we pit the agriculture producer, the potash producer, and others, against other people in our society.

(1630)

I believe at this time the only short-term solution to the problem at hand is that we are probably going to have to have federal legislation put in place so that we can get past this work stoppage. And then hopefully, Mr. Speaker, this federal Liberal government will start to listen to reason and provide the tools necessary so that this doesn't happen again.

We also see a massive offloading occurring on western Canada in other areas. My motion talks about health care. And it's been bad enough to be a rural person in this province, Mr. Speaker, with what's transpired in the last few years, with the closing of our acute care institutions and a lot of our long-term care facilities — to have on top of that the federal Liberal government offloading \$7 billion in cuts onto the very people who are absolutely desperate at times in searching out for their health requirements.

Mr. Speaker, \$1.6 billion paid out in some form to the producers of western Canada will not offset one year's transportation requirements. And the government, the federal government, simply throws out the figure of 1.6 and they don't tell us if it's going to be paid to the landowner, if it's going to be paid to the producer. Is it going to be paid on cultivated acres or is it going to be paid on summerfallow acres? They have simply said to the producers in this province and other provinces: go out and sow the crop and trust us to come up with a solution.

Mr. Speaker, that is absolutely unacceptable. And the responses that I've had from the provincial Minister of Agriculture to date in this legislature have also been unacceptable. When you think that this province has over half the farm land in Canada, you would have thought there might have been some thinking going

on inside this government as to what would be their preferred solution if the method of payment ever changed.

And there have been warning signals coming all through the winter months in this province, Mr. Speaker. Warning signals that should have been apparent to the provincial government and that they be prepared to implement a plan that would allow our producers the best options. To date that hasn't come forward.

So I'm urging in this motion, Mr. Speaker, I'm urging, and would be happy to join with the provincial government in presenting to the federal Liberal government, a united front with options that are acceptable to the people of this province, and indeed I believe will be acceptable to western Canadians because we are not only the ones with the most to lose, but the ones with the most to offer in providing solutions.

And I say to the members of the New Democratic Party government here today that it is time to put some of your past thinking away. I was very pleased when the Minister of Agriculture in debate on his estimates the other day said that he would not necessarily be opposed to unlimited running rights in the western Canadian rail network. Mr. Speaker, that is a tremendous jump, leap of faith, for a New Democrat to take.

And I also say to the people that the men and women that work in the rail business in this country, if you don't want to see 6,000 miles of branch lines and your jobs that go with those 6,000 miles of branch lines disappear in very short order, then we had better come up with some ideas and some solutions that'll keep some of that steel and ties and roadbed in operation, servicing the growing industries and diversification of rural Saskatchewan, or your jobs will be gone. Because if that 6,000 miles disappears and we are down to the main lines and a few select branch lines, I can tell you that those jobs are gone. And they are gone forever. Because once the steel is gone, those railways — I say to you, Mr. Speaker — will never be rebuilt.

So it is time that members of this House and members of the various farm organizations and political parties start to put on their thinking cap about the ways that we can present a united front to the federal government because the next 18 months will be absolutely crucial to the make up and social fabric of this province and how our future will look for decades to come.

Mr. Speaker, this is only the first federal budget in a long series of budgets, I believe, which are going to be aimed directly at western Canada. And why do I say that? I say that because there are 99 Liberal Members of Parliament in the province of Ontario, and there is a Liberal Prime Minister from the province of Quebec, and history tells me that the Liberal Party nationally wants to retake the province of Quebec because they have always been able to govern this country when they've had Quebec and Ontario basically behind them.

And western Canada, Mr. Speaker, has felt the impact of that type of government for decades, for absolute decades. I mean, one of the reasons that the CCF Party, forerunner to the NDP, rose in this province, Mr. Speaker, is because of the fact that that domination of eastern Canada over the rest of the regions

and companies like CP Rail drove western Canadian people to desperation.

And I say to the members of the NDP, if we think of solutions which are not just unique to this province but solutions which are applicable to western Canada as a whole, then people of all political stripes — whether they be Reformers, NDP, Conservatives — can have the opportunity to say to the federal government, we won't take any more of this; there has to be fairness in how you apply debt and deficit reduction in the country of Canada, and you simply cannot pick on one particular region.

Mr. Speaker, it was almost heartening to see former Liberal Finance ministers on television a few weeks ago talk about some of the past programs which have been utter failures in building a national fabric. You know, when you think about the national energy program and what it did to this country by setting back our ability to coexist with all of our trading partners in the world today, you understand that they know the problem; they simply don't have the political courage to solve it.

Never again, Mr. Speaker, should we have those types of programs imposed upon western Canada. I'm glad to see the minister responsible for Fisheries in this country stand up and defend the east coast fishery. It's about high time that we asserted some sovereignty over a national resource. But by the same token we should not stand by, Mr. Speaker, and see that same government use western Canada as a way to solve their national problems.

So I say to the members of the New Democratic Party, when we vote on this motion a little later today, it's time to show a united front to the people in Ottawa. It's time to say to the Liberals that you're not going to short-change us, that we aren't going to take it lying down. And it's also time for all of us to say there has to be a better way. There has to be a better way to solve our national transportation problems instead of pitting citizen against citizen and in the end losing all of it to ports and railways in the United States of America.

That doesn't solve anything. It doesn't keep one job in this province. It doesn't keep one job in western Canada, and it doesn't keep one job in Canada. It loses taxpayers to help pay down the deficit. All of those jobs that are going to follow potash to Portland should be in the country of Canada.

Are Canadians so stupid that they cannot be competitive, that they don't realize what can be lost? I don't believe so. I don't believe, whether it's the farmer in my home district or my friends that work for the CPR (Canadian Pacific Railway) in Moose Jaw . . . are so stupid that we would let this slip away. What we need to have is a federal national government that has a national transportation policy in place, that allows those people to work together instead of being pitted against one another, Mr. Speaker, at each and every opportunity.

And that means that political parties in this province and in other provinces are going to have to smarten up and not simply pander to special interest groups as we have done in the past. And whether that be large multinationals or trade unions, the

pandering has to stop because it is doing nothing, absolutely nothing, to do the kind of problem solving that we need.

You know it is going to be an awful bleak picture out there, Mr. Speaker, in the rural parts of this province if the worst-case scenario happens. There isn't one of us who sits in this Assembly today that represents a rural riding that knows parts of that riding that will become almost uninhabitable if you don't have a few basic services available.

What in the world is the point of gambling every year on growing a crop if you have no sure way of turning that crop into cash and marketing successfully so that you can continue on another year?

I don't know about the rest of the farmers in this legislature, but I can tell you that it only takes about one bad year now on my farm to put a lot of things in jeopardy. It used to be that you could weather two or three or four, that the vagaries of climate and markets . . . and you were able to get by it. You could live off your depreciation. There was perhaps family members that were there with you. But today the costs are such that you get one bad year — and I don't care how much money you thought you had — you are at risk.

And we have falling land values because of what has transpired with the Crow, and we are going to have communities lose the major tax base associated with railroads, grain elevators, and the corresponding services that rural people used because that rail line was there. Those things are all now in question.

So, Mr. Speaker, by moving a motion such as this, I believe we have the opportunity as a Legislative Assembly to put our thinking hats on, to think about ways of solving problems that have never been possible before because we all had our own cosy little niche to fit into. Well, ladies and gentlemen, the cosy little niche disappeared on federal budget day. Jean Chrétien and the federal Liberals said, you are not important enough in this country to have that cosy little niche there any more.

Well I don't accept it. I want to stand on my own two feet. But I also want to prove to Mr. Chrétien and his eastern-based party that we're strong enough, that we're resilient enough, and we're smart enough to present them an alternative that they can't refuse; and if they wish to persevere, that we'll make it politically untenable for them to continue on in the way that they're doing.

(1645)

And that has to be the message that's sent, Mr. Speaker. And that's why I think this motion, sent by this House, to the federal government would strengthen the hand of the producers of western Canada in their fight to survive in 1995.

And I would read it into the record once more. This is seconded . . . moved by myself, seconded by the member from Morse:

That this Assembly urge the provincial government to press the federal government for fairness to western Canadian people in light of the federal government's minimal pay-out of the Crow benefit, \$7 billion in cuts

to health care, and failing to defend western Canadian producers against railway strikes that are hindering the transportation of grain to export and therefore significantly increasing costs to producers to transport their grain.

I so move.

Mr. Harper: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join in this debate rather briefly. And at the conclusion of my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I'll be moving an amendment to the motion, and the amendment will be:

That the words "and lockouts" be added after the words "against railway strikes".

Mr. Speaker, I would like to compliment my colleague from Thunder Creek on this motion, for I think we all in the House here fundamentally agree with the principle of his motion. And I think that there's absolutely no doubt at all that the federal government, the present federal government in Ottawa, has taken some very negative budgetary moves towards the future and economic viability of many of agricultural producers in Saskatchewan.

It's almost, Mr. Speaker, as if western Canada and farmers in Saskatchewan have been picked out as the whipping boy for the federal government to balance their budget on. And that's truly sad, Mr. Speaker. Because as my colleague has already mentioned, the effects on Saskatchewan and on farm families in Saskatchewan as a result of the federal budget and the elimination of the Crow benefit will be very devastating — without a doubt.

And the overall concern here, Mr. Speaker, is the lack of fairness in the federal budget, the lack of fairness as a result of that federal budget. I think we all agree as Canadians — and I know my farmers in my constituency will be the first to agree — that we have to get our financial house in order in this country in order to maintain the quality of life that we've experienced in the past, and the quality of living. And we want that, Mr. Speaker, not only for ourselves, we want that for our children and for our grandchildren. And the farmers in my constituency, Mr. Speaker, are prepared to do their share, pay their fair price, and join in with all Canadians in addressing the financial situation of this country.

But there's a general feeling, Mr. Speaker, throughout my constituency and particularly with my farm families, that this federal budget is not fair. This federal approach to deficit reduction is not fair. And what saddens them even more so, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that what they're seeing happen to the Crow rate benefit and to their rural way of life, they're seeing a federal Liberal government completing the moves that was started by the former Mulroney Conservative government in Canada.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it is saddening — saddening to have to be here this afternoon and debating this issue, saddening because what we will see as a result — soon after August 1 — as a result of the elimination of the Crow rate benefits, we will see some dramatic changes to the trading patterns within our

province, we will see some dramatic changes and that dramatic effects on our towns, our cities and our villages.

And, Mr. Speaker, we all realize that change, change is something that comes. And usually change means progress, and change is all right if it's planned. But, Mr. Speaker, it's obvious that the federal government, through their budget, has had no plan — no plan for rural Saskatchewan, no plan for the change to the Crow rate benefit, no plans for transportation, and no plans for our farm families.

Mr. Speaker, this has become very obvious the way they suggest that they will assist farm families in making this transition with \$1.6 billion one-time pay-out — which, Mr. Speaker, actually will end up in the landowners' hands and not in the hands of the actual farmers out there. Many of these landowners, Mr. Speaker, much of the land is owned not by the farmers that are operating it, but they lease that land. In a lot of cases they're leasing it from financial institutions.

So ultimately, Mr. Speaker, that money ends up back in the hands of the banks and not in the hands of the farmers who are being impacted upon by the changes to the Crown rate benefit.

That further saddens me, Mr. Speaker, because as we all know, the agriculture industry has been under some financial stress over the last number of years. And in a lot of these cases, Mr. Speaker, in a lot of cases of many farm families out there, this particular move by the federal government will mean the end of their agricultural career; will mean the end of their agricultural business; will mean the end of their ability to make a living on the farm; will mean the end of their ability to stay in that community, and quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, in a lot of communities it will mean the end of the community.

It's sad, Mr. Speaker, because there has been no plan to handle this situation. We all agree that change is about and agriculture is going through its own change, and with the expansion of the agricultural markets globally and the impact that global marketing has on agriculture, change is inevitable.

And as I said earlier, there's nothing wrong with change when there's a planned system of having it to make the transitions, to make the system flow, to make it humanistic. But this certainly doesn't, Mr. Speaker. In fact what we will see in my constituency alone — we will see a number of farmers who I believe that by this spring, certainly by this fall, will likely no longer be able to pursue their agricultural career.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, we have a federal Liberal Agriculture minister who was an MLA in this House a number of years back. And if I can quote from *Hansard* of August 24, 1987, Mr. Goodale at that time suggested that what was needed was a strong and fully functional rail system to serve our grain and potash producers or they're in big trouble. That's when he was an MLA in 1987 in this legislature.

Today, as federal Minister of Agriculture, he has eliminated the Crow rate benefit, putting many farmers into a financial tailspin. And he has also put the CNR (Canadian National Railway) on the auction block, eliminating our own nationally owned rail system, which would ensure our ability to move our

product, ensure our ability to move our product to market.

And when I say our product, Mr. Speaker, I don't only mean potash and grain, which are probably the two most important.

But there is a number of other products such as, in my constituency, forestry. I've had the occasion more than once making my way down to Regina here having to wait for the train at the Canora crossing, and while there, I've seen countless numbers of rail cars loaded with lumber going to export. There's just a humongous amount of products moved in and out of this province by rail.

And yet, Mr. Speaker, our federal Agriculture minister has certainly turned his back on us and, if nothing else, I would say betrayed us as has the Liberal federal government. They have betrayed Saskatchewan, betrayed rural Saskatchewan in particular, and I would say held at hostage the Saskatchewan farmer.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to move an amendment to my colleague's motion, seconded by my colleague from Melville, and I will read it one more time, Mr. Speaker:

That the words "and lockout" be added after the words "against railway strikes".

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Amendment agreed to.

The division bells rang from 4:57 p.m. until 4:59 p.m.

Motion as amended agreed to on the following recorded division.

Yeas

| | | |
|--------------|-------------|---------|
| Lingenfelter | Shillington | Johnson |
| Kowalsky | Penner | Hagel |
| Bradley | Teichrob | Pringle |
| Cline | Hamilton | Sonntag |
| Flavel | Langford | Scott |
| Stanger | Harper | Keeping |
| Carlson | Swenson | Neudorf |
| Martens | Goohsen | Britton |

— 24

Nays

— Nil

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, by leave I would move a motion that we send the motion, along with the speeches delivered here in the House today, to the Minister of Agriculture in Ottawa, by leave, and with the votes.

And by leave, I would move that motion now.

Leave granted.

MOTIONS

Transmittal Motion

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I will just read the motion as it's now structured, but moved and seconded by the member from Morse, by leave:

Be it resolved that the debate, transcript, and vote of rule 16 motion and the private member motion no. 2 be forwarded to the federal Minister of Agriculture and the Clerk of the House of Commons.

I so move.

The division bells rang from 5:05 p.m. until 5:06 p.m.

Motion agreed to on the following recorded division.

Yeas

| | | |
|--------------|-------------|---------|
| Lingenfelter | Shillington | Johnson |
| Kowalsky | Penner | Hagel |
| Bradley | Teichrob | Pringle |
| Cline | Hamilton | Flavel |
| Langford | Scott | Stanger |
| Harper | Keeping | Carlson |
| Neudorf | Martens | Goohsen |
| Britton | McPherson | |

— 23

Nays

— Nil

The Speaker: — Before I recognize the Government House Leader, the motion does not indicate this, but I assumed you meant sent by the Speaker.

An Hon. Member: — Yes, indeed.

The Speaker: — All right.

The Assembly adjourned at 5:08 p.m.