

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
March 18, 1981

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is indeed a pleasure for me to introduce to you, and to the members of this Assembly, eight students from the Grant Road developmental classroom. Three of them are sitting behind the rail and the other five are in the Speaker's gallery. They are accompanied, as well, by six members of the teaching staff at the Grant Road School. They are Cindy Hysuik, Charlene McLean, Val Aston, Marg Janick, Yvonne Schalme and Jim McMurtry. I will meet with them after question period, Mr. Speaker, for some refreshments. I would ask the members of the Assembly to join with me in welcoming this group to the Assembly this afternoon.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. LINGENFELTER: — I would like to join the member for Regina South in welcoming this group from the Grant Road developmental centre. It is indeed a pleasure to have you here today. I would just like to mention, as well, that I have had discussions with the Minister of Government Services and we are looking at a process of making the gallery accessible to the handicapped. I think this is indeed appropriate in the International Year of the Disabled person. I will add to that, as well, that the developmental classroom program here in Saskatchewan was one of the first instituted in Canada. I would like to congratulate the Minister of Education on that point. I am sure that all members will welcome them here today, and hope that they have an enjoyable visit.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. KOSKIE: — Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to introduce through you to the House, 18 grade 8 students from the Quill Lake School. They are here today in the Speaker's gallery and are accompanied by their teacher, Joan Krinke, and other chaperones, Hilda Odelein, Garfield MacGillivray, and their bus driver, Jim Haggard. I want to welcome the students here. I hope that they have an informative afternoon in the legislature, and that they have an enjoyable visit to Regina. I will be meeting with you a little later this afternoon.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. DYCK: — Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to introduce to you, and to this legislature, 35 grade 8 students from the St. Michael School in Saskatoon in the constituency of Saskatoon Mayfair. They are with Ernest Boyko, Chester Knight and Robert Isinger. I hope the students from St. Michael School, sitting in the west gallery, enjoy the activities in the legislature this afternoon. I want to welcome them here. I look forward to the opportunity of meeting them later in the rotunda area.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

A-1 Alliance Day Care Centre

MRS. DUNCAN: — My question is directed to the Minister of Social Services regarding the ombudsman's report on the A-1 Alliance Day Care Centre. Mr. Minister, your department is charged with protecting the children of Saskatchewan, yet it would appear that it failed to intervene even after repeated allegations of harsh treatment started coming out of this particular centre. Could you please tell me what disciplinary action has been taken against the officials in your department involved in this case? Have you taken any disciplinary action because of their lack of action, or because perhaps they were apathetic to the situation? I think Mr. Tickell's statement that your department placed the children in attendance at the day care centre in a situation of potential risk for an unacceptably prolonged period is quite a damning condemnation of your department.

HON. MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, I would first like to inform the member for Maple Creek and the Assembly that the incidents she refers to occurred in 1979. They occurred in 1979 and the report deals with allegations (and they are allegations) of mistreatment of children, rather than actual incidents that have been proven.

I think that it is also appropriate to mention that the report recommends in five areas that certain things happen. I wish to inform the Assembly today that as of this morning a letter was sent to the ombudsman, in which the recommendations have been accepted; they will be implemented at the first opportunity.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MRS. DUNCAN: — That's admirable. I wonder if you could table that letter, Mr. Minister.

Staff Increase in Child Abuse Section

MRS. DUNCAN: — I would like to ask, in light of the increased funding in day care (which to date appears not to be adequate), are you also increasing staffing in your child-abuse section to monitor complaints that might emulate out of other day care centres and also just general allegations of child abuse? Are you increasing your staff? It's apparent that this problem is not just confined to Saskatchewan. I think Alberta, also, in the report that was just handed down, appears to be having the same type of problems.

HON. MR. LINGENFELTER: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, in the area of day care staffing, as announced in my speech on the budget, I did announce that there would be increases in staff. Ten new people will be involved in the day care division. It is fair to say, as well, that recommendation number one in that report of the ombudsman dealt with recording of incidents of alleged child mistreatment. That recommendation, in fact, has been implemented already and they are being recorded.

As well, recommendation number one states that the department should take the role of dealing directly with parents, rather than with the board, when such incidents occur. We believe that's a good recommendation and are acting on it at this time.

MRS. DUNCAN: — One final supplementary. Is your department perhaps formulating a

set of guidelines for all day care centres as to how punishment should be handled or how disciplinary action should be taken, so that these are standardized right across the province?

HON. MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, I think in the day care regulations at the present time, they are stated fairly accurately and that corporal punishment and isolation are not to be tolerated. I think that that is universal across the province; it will be maintained.

Shortage of Speech Therapists

MR. PICKERING: — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Health. Mr. Minister, there is a significant backlog of people requiring the assistance of speech therapists throughout the province. For example, Moose Jaw rural area has been completely cut off; the Melfort-Tisdale position is vacant, serving an area of 85 schools; Prince Albert has a backlog of three to six months. The budget provides for more funds, but the problem is getting more serious. Are you undertaking any immediate steps to alleviate this problem?

HON. MR. ROLFES: — Yes, Mr. Speaker. I have discussed this with the member just a few weeks ago and I think the Moose Jaw situation . . . It should be related to the members here that the speech therapist was on leave of absence (and the member is aware of that), so we did have some difficulties there. But also I think members should be aware that the budget speech did announce that the Minister of Education was starting a new program in that particular area for speech therapy.

So, yes, we are doing something. We've had discussions between the Department of Health and the Department of Social Services and Education, and we are addressing ourselves to those areas.

MR. PICKERING: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. This being the International Year of Disabled Persons, I'm surprised you wouldn't have had this program in place January 1. Nearly 25 per cent of 1981 is gone and you're indicating that the program is going to be put in place during the year.

HON. MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Speaker, there was certainly not a question asked, but I would like to comment on the comment that was made. As I indicated to the member of Regina South in his address on the budget, there is approximately \$82 million in this budget addressing itself to the Year of the Handicapped and this government will match its endeavours in the area of the handicapped with any other government in Canada. I think we will find that we are leading in that particular regard.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANE: — The minister has just indicated that he is proud of his record in regard to the problems with the shortage of speech therapists in the province and the rather tragic consequences of that shortage. Would the minister be prepared to state why it takes a function like the International Year of the Disabled to cause him to act on a problem that has obviously been ongoing and has been getting worse over the years? Is it just another example of the tokenism that you showed during the International Year of the Child?

HON. MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Speaker, I was wondering how long it would take the member

for Qu'Appelle to upstage his other members again. Mr. Speaker, it's simply not true. We set up a task force in rehabilitation two years ago. The task force submitted its report to the Minister of Health in January. We have already acted on one of the major recommendations which was to build a rehabilitation centre for Regina. I've announced that in the budget. It will probably cost in the neighbourhood of \$20 million. We have set up a group from education, health and social services to co-ordinate our activities. In the Department of Health we are actively pursuing how we can quickly adopt many of the recommendations contained in the task force. Many of those recommendations, Mr. Speaker, pertain to the federal government. They pertain to private agencies and I know they pertain to other departments. I will be in contact with my colleagues very quickly to see how they can help me to carry out those recommendations.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Supplementary question to the minister. As part of your program do you have anything for the training of speech therapists in Saskatchewan?

HON. MR. ROLFES: — Yes, that's in the Department of Education.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Perhaps the Minister of Education would like to answer. Where will this training take place and what kind of program do you have in place for it?

HON. MR. McARTHUR: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'm more than pleased to answer this question because this is a matter of some pride for the Government of Saskatchewan this year. We have been involved in negotiations with the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia in order to develop an integrated program of post secondary education for professionals in a variety of fields serving adults and young people with disabilities. As the hon. member knows, one of the difficulties in this field is that there have not been an adequate number of trained specialists. In the three provinces of Alberta, British Columbia and Saskatchewan, the ministers of advanced and continuing education have been working out arrangements whereby we would be providing the opportunities for people to take programs in this field and other fields. We will be supporting them with fellowships and other types of assistance. It is certainly something about which, I think, we can be justifiably proud.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

Attendance at Meeting of Attorneys General re Constitution

MR. LANE: — Question to any of the members of the treasury bench prepared to answer in the absence of the Premier (and I see the member for Regina North-East prepared to leap to his feet). The Premier indicated today in his press conference that he was not aware of any plans of the Deputy Premier to attend a meeting of those attorneys general opposed to Trudeau's constitutional package. The Attorney General for the province on Manitoba has indicated that the Attorney General for Saskatchewan would be attending. There seems to be a breakdown of communication again between your government and the governments of the other western provinces. I could give you other examples.

You've been attending the cabinet meetings. Are you aware of any position by your government that the Deputy Premier would be attending the next meetings of those provinces opposed to Trudeau's constitutional package?

HON. MR. SMISHEK: — Mr. Speaker, I think probably the only break in communications is in the mind of the hon. member. We do have a position on the constitutional question. Whether or not the Attorney General will be attending the meeting is a matter that will be decided in due course.

MR. LANE: — Supplementary. Are you saying that no decision has been made whether the Attorney General of Saskatchewan will be attending the next meeting? You said it will be in due course. I think that leads to the obvious answer that in fact no decision has yet been made. Will you state that no such decision has been made?

HON. MR. SMISHEK: — Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of a precise date for that meeting. Since the Attorney General is out of the country I have not had an opportunity to discuss that matter with him. Any announcement that may come will come in due course.

MR. LANE: — Supplementary to the minister. Is the minister telling this Assembly that in a matter as important as the government's stand on the constitution and whether or not it joins with those provinces opposed to unilateral patriation, you, first of all, do not have a position, and secondly, it has not yet been discussed in cabinet so that you could speak on behalf of cabinet in the absence of the Premier and Deputy Premier?

HON. MR. SMISHEK: — Mr. Speaker, the matter of the patriation of the Canadian constitution has been before the people of Canada for some 54 years. It's not a matter about which a decision can be made today or tomorrow. It is a matter that is receiving paramount attention from the House of Commons at the present time, and by all of the provinces. The situation is changing. It is also a situation that is receiving attention from the House of Commons in Westminster. So the matter will be before us for some time to come. It's not a matter that will be decided today or tomorrow.

Location and Size of Heavy Oil Upgrader

MR. ANDREW: — A question to the Minister of Mineral Resources. Some weeks ago, Mr. Minister, a press release came out from the Government of Saskatchewan announcing the formation of a consortium to study the potential construction of a heavy oil upgrader for Saskatchewan. One of the players in that consortium is obviously SaskOil, and I suppose indirectly the Government of Saskatchewan.

Would the Minister advise this Assembly as to the preference of the Government of Saskatchewan on the question of location and size?

HON. MR. COWLEY: — Well, with respect to size, one of the objectives of the study is to look at the various options and make some recommendations whether it should be a small unit or a large unit — 30,000 barrels, 60,000 barrels, or 100,000 barrels a day. You pick your own number. That of course relates to the supply question as well. So, I expect that one of the outcomes of that study would be some recommendations or alternatives with respect to size.

Similarly, with respect to location, our obvious preference is Saskatchewan. That's where we anticipate it will be. In terms of the options within Saskatchewan, there are several that could be looked at. Again, one of the terms of reference of the study is to look at and make recommendations with respect to location.

MR. ANDREW: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. As it relates to the question of location

and the question of feeder stock supply, can the minister advise this Assembly on the position of SaskOil as to whether or not the upgrader should be built on the interprovincial pipeline or in very close proximity to it, or whether it should more likely be built closer to the fields and perhaps away from the interprovincial pipeline?

HON. MR. COWLEY: — I have talked to the people in SaskOil about this and we frankly don't have any firm views. We would like to get some more information, in terms of the size of the refinery, and whether or not it would be desirable and economically possible to further upgrade to the actual refining stage (whatever might come out of an upgrader), and these are some of the questions we need to address. Obviously from a provincial government's point of view, there are some advantages in having an upgrader or a complex which would be relatively easily accessible from the southwest area of the province. Again, you are talking about building competing pipelines. If you were going to move from the source of the heavy oil to some other location for the upgrader, you would have the problem of transporting there.

I think, frankly, we don't yet know enough about either the economics of it or the supply questions to give a definitive answer. The people at SaskOil are reasonably open with respect to these questions. They have some views. They are not firm in them, because they don't have enough information. They are looking forward to a lot of information coming out of this study.

MR. ANDREW: — Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. As you know, the Government of Saskatchewan is owner of the resource; given the fact that the upgrader is going to be located in Saskatchewan the government will also have an impact or a potential impact on the location of the upgrader. My question to the minister is this. There is a fair amount of talk around the oil industry these days that the Government of Saskatchewan is lobbying very strenuously to have that upgrader located in Regina. Can you advise this Assembly if it is true that, in fact, the Government of Saskatchewan is pushing and lobbying to have the upgrader located in or near Regina?

HON. MR. COWLEY: — That is not true.

Demand Meters

MR. GARNER: — Mr. Speaker, a question to the minister in charge of Sask Power. In regard to the question yesterday, a demand meter takes the peak period load to determine the power rate for that month. The peak period is determined within a very short period of time. Yesterday in the *Leader-Post* you stated that the reason for this was to encourage conservation of power. Churches' peak power usage is usually during services on Saturday or Sunday. Will you now not admit to this Assembly, to all of the people in Saskatchewan, that the 28 per cent increase in power rates is unjust, and is an unfair tax on churches in Saskatchewan?

HON. MR. McARTHUR: — Mr. Speaker, no I will not say what the hon. member wishes me to say. I should point out to the hon. member that the demand charges, which have as part of them, as the hon. member mentions, a measure of the peak usage, are only part of the calculation for the charges made for power to that user. The demand factor is used for one part of the calculation. The hon. member, I think, is incorrect when he says that the charges will increase by 28 per cent. The aspect of the charges which relates to demand charges will increase quite considerably because of the nature of the demand charges.

I would say to the hon. member that the time of peak usage depends very much on the nature of the usage. In the case of churches to which he refers, the most common factor in terms of determining the demand charge is in the kitchens of the church halls, when the stoves and electricity are used at a high rate for cooking. That is usually when the demand factor comes into play, not on Saturdays or Sundays.

I would point out to the hon. member that these kinds of demand charges are the logical part of any system of rate setting which does try to encourage the conservation of electrical use. Certainly in the case of the smaller users, I am prepared to look at measures which can alleviate the impact of conservation measures. It is difficult when you're introducing conservation measures to selectively be able to alleviate the impact on everyone. Certainly in the case of users where there is a justifiable case of hardship to be made, I am prepared to look at the possibility of alleviating measures and we will certainly look at the cases of the churches and church halls as part of that.

MR. GARNER: — Well, Mr. Minister, it's quite evident that you go to church for supper, not the sermon. My question to you is: what action do you suggest that the churches of Saskatchewan take to reduce their power usage and will you now not reconsider this very exorbitant power rate increase for the churches in Saskatchewan?

HON. MR. McARTHUR: — Mr. Speaker, there are no selective power rates for churches. There are categories of rates which apply to different categories of users. I think in the general service categories there are about four or five categories. Within those fall a number of different kinds of users. There is no power utility anywhere in the world, that I know of, which develops rates selectively for each and every individual user. What we must try to do is structure a distribution of rates so that we have the best possible burden of charges distributed in the fairest way in relation to costs and in relation to use. Certainly the general service users, in which this category of use falls, are not overcharged. The charges are not exorbitant; they are higher, I understand, in Alberta than they are here for that category of user. And, I don't believe there is any place else where you can argue justifiably that there are lower charges.

I indicated to the hon. member that, as we try to introduce conservation factors into the structure of our power rates, there are legitimate reasons to consider some of the difficulties of certain users being able to undertake conservation measures. I am certainly looking at that on a continuing basis in order to see what kind of adjustments can be made.

MR. GARNER: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, I think now we have pointed out quite plainly to you this tax on these churches in Saskatchewan. Will you not, at this time, pull the demand meters from churches, schools and recreation facilities in the province of Saskatchewan, and get off the backs of the taxpayers of Saskatchewan?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. McARTHUR: — Mr. Speaker, I will not, of course, at this time, pull the demand meters. The meters which establish the charges for electrical use are a part of the overall system. The hon. member somehow suggests that if you were to pull some kind of meter out of the system, you would solve a problem. Well, I don't think I need to talk about how ridiculous that suggestion is. If the hon. members opposite could ever, Mr. Speaker, get down to making a constructive suggestion to deal with the problems, it

would be somewhat of a treat to be in this legislature. But they are not able to do so.

I would say that a much more constructive suggestion is to undertake (as I have indicated I am doing), within the basic principle of using rate structures which encourage conservation, to look at the possibilities of making adjustments to alleviate some of the impact on users who are not able to shift their load use at peak times. That I am doing at the present time and it could very well benefit some of the users you are indicating. But it will not solve any problem whatsoever to walk in and rip off the meters which are hanging there to meter power use.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Supplementary question to the minister in charge of Sask Power, Mr. Speaker. In light of the feeble answers you have been giving and the attempts to justify your increases, will you advise this Assembly what your profit was for 1980? We don't have your statement yet and I don't know when we're going to get it, but I'm sure you must know what your net profit was for the year 1980.

HON. MR. McARTHUR: — Mr. Speaker, the annual report will be tabled very, very soon. The hon. members know quite well, at least I assume they know having been members of this legislature for a couple of years, that in the annual report is reported the profits and so on. I will tell the hon. member that they are somewhat better than Manitoba Hydro which has announced a very huge loss. I assume that as a result of the ineffective management by a Tory government in Manitoba, it has assumed, really, an astronomical loss. I will tell the hon. members that the profit will be somewhat better than that of Manitoba Hydro. Because of the rate of consumption the profit will not be in the same range as last year, but the figures, as required by legislation as the hon. members well know, will be tabled in this House as part of the annual report and that will be in a very few days. So I ask the hon. members to be patient and wait, and the report will be here.

MR. LANE: — Mr. Minister, it is interesting to note that Manitoba froze electrical rates for a period of years to alleviate some of the financial burden on the taxpayers of the province of Manitoba. Would the minister opposite be prepared to change the policy of SPC and do two things: firstly, eliminate the indirect taxing on community associations, churches and schools of this province; and secondly, announce an immediate utility rate freeze through SPC for the taxpayers of this province, so that they are not paying for profits for SPC, which you have just indicated there will be, and so that they are not paying an indirect tax to the province of Saskatchewan?

HON. MR. McARTHUR: — Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to get into comparative management of Manitoba Hydro and Sask Power Corporation. The Tory Government of Manitoba, as I understand it, without any understanding of the economics or finance of operating Manitoba Hydro, directed . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order! I wonder if we could return to a level of noise in the Chamber that would allow me to hear the answer to the question.

HON. MR. McARTHUR: — The Manitoba government directed Manitoba Hydro, without any understanding of the financial operations of that corporation, to freeze its power rates. The hon. members are quite right. What has been the result?

Firstly, the Manitoba government has had to pour subsidies (which the hon. members, of course, do not believe enterprises or businesses should receive) into that corporation to try to cover up the impact of that quite foolish decision.

Secondly, that corporation is now losing very substantial amounts of money, putting it in a very difficult situation in terms of financing further development plans, as well as covering its costs.

Thirdly, Mr. Speaker, they are desperately trying to get through to the next election because they now know they can't afford those subsidies; they can't afford those losses, and they will probably have to increase their rates by 50 per cent.

Now, I ask the members if they want us to do that in Saskatchewan, and put that kind of a burden on our taxpayers after an election?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 40 — An Act respecting the establishment of the Wakamow Valley Authority

HON. MR. SNYDER: — Mr. Speaker, I move that a bill respecting the establishment of the Wakamow Valley Authority be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion agreed to and ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting of the House.

PRIORITY OF DEBATE

Delayed Announcement of Initial Payments to Saskatchewan Grain Farmers

MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Speaker, before orders of the day, I rise, in accordance with rule no. 17 of the *Rules and Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly*, having received confirmation from the Clerk for a priority of debate on a matter that is deemed to be of public importance. The statement of the matter is as follows, Mr. Speaker:

The minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board has announced his intention to delay the announcement of initial payments to the farmers of Saskatchewan until June or July. This information is of urgent and compelling importance now, so that the farmers may intelligently plan before spring planting. It is therefore our intention that this urgent and compelling matter be given priority of debate under rule no. 17.

MR. SPEAKER: — A notice under rule 17 was received in the Clerk's office at 11:55 today, for which I thank the member. I find the subject matter as raised by the hon. member is out of order, since it is not within the jurisdiction of the Government of Saskatchewan. I refer all hon. members to Beauchesne's *Parliamentary Rules and Forms*, Fifth Edition, page 91, section 285, which states:

It must deal with a matter within the administrative competence of the government, and there must be no other reasonable opportunity for debate.

I also refer members to precedents of our Legislative Assembly, *Journals of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan*, March 6, 1974; November 29, 1974; March 10, 1975; and May 16, 1980.

MR. LANE: — Mr. Speaker, if I may raise a point of order. The point of order is that the

action that can be taken on this — a recommendation from this Assembly to the Government of Canada, the Minister of Agriculture, the minister responsible for the wheat board — is directly within the jurisdiction of this province. And it's the action that we are recommending . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order! Apparently the member did not listen very closely to the statement which I just made. And may I direct his attention to that statement when it appears in the *Hansard*, because I think it is quite clear that this matter is not within the administrative competence of the Government of Saskatchewan.

MOTIONS

Delayed Announcement of Initial Payments to Saskatchewan Grain Farmers

MR. BERNTSON: — Of course, if that's your ruling we are obliged to accept. I would then ask leave to move a motion:

That the urgent and compelling matter of the lack of initial payment information from the Canadian Wheat Board for the prairie farmer, necessary to intelligently plan spring planting, be debated in this House forthwith.

MR. SPEAKER: — Does the member have the motion?

MR. BERNTSON: — Yes.

MR. SPEAKER: — There is an opportunity for a motion to be brought forward at this time for discussion. However, the matter requires unanimous consent of the Legislative Assembly. Is there unanimous consent? Motion agreed.

MR. BERNTSON: — Mr. Speaker, my remarks will be brief. The problem is obvious . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I haven't got a copy; I gave the only one I had to the Speaker. I have several copies of the priority of debate but that was ruled out of order. Mr. Speaker, could I ask the Clerk to provide a copy of the motion to the government members? I would like to provide each one of them with it, so that we can refer to it when we enter the debate later.

The problem is obvious and apparent to anyone who has been around Saskatchewan for any length of time. Spring seeding time is fast approaching. In order for farmers to make any intelligent decisions relating to spring planting, it's only proper that they should have all information available from the Canadian Wheat Board, as it relates to market analysis and initial prices, etc. In these times of very minimal profit margins in the agricultural community, it is important that all information possible be made available to farmers while they are planning for the next year's operation. It's not fair for the federal minister responsible for the wheat board to say that he is delaying announcement until he has more information available to him. Because quite simply, it's after the fact. Any information that comes out in June or July is after the fact. The crops have been sown. You can't dig them up and replant; it's that simple.

The other thing that concerns me is why this year the federal minister responsible for the wheat board has decided that he doesn't have the information available. Is it because the information is available, but that the markets aren't there and he doesn't have the courage to tell the farming community that we are once again in a world surplus position? I don't know. It's a very real possibility. But these are points that the farming community has to have in order to intelligently plan and produce for a hungry world. And I, therefore, move, seconded by my seatmate:

That the urgent and compelling matter of the lack of initial payment information from the Canadian Wheat Board for the prairie farmer is necessary to intelligently plan spring planting be debated in this House forthwith.

And I think, Mr. Speaker has adopted the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. TAYLOR: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is indeed a pleasure to second what I feel is a very important motion concerning the economic future of our farmers in Saskatchewan. It seems rather strange that the Minister of Agriculture in this province would not have taken immediate action on this announcement, to put forth the case of the Saskatchewan farmers that they should be informed of what the initial prices may be before the seed is in the ground. I think, if we just look outside the city of Regina, we will see that there are impending drought conditions in Saskatchewan this year. Therefore, with the past record, our agricultural receipts were down last year. We know that our crops were lower than they normally have been. I think it is of vast importance that these farmers who are facing inflation (our number one problem out there) be given every opportunity to make the economic decisions that will allow them to stay on their land and to keep up their payments.

I think especially of many of the young farmers who are out there in Saskatchewan. I think of the Yorkton-Melville area of this province where, as you all know, they have had drought and early frost. In the last three or four years, many of the farmers in that area have been suffering under a very severe economic burden. Some of them are in danger of losing their farms if things do not improve.

So I think it is of vast importance that the federal government be urged by all members of the legislature to get out and to come forth with what these people can expect under initial payments. There is no sense, as my colleague says, planning after the fact. I think the questions which are faced by the farmers out there today are many. What should I be planting? What crop? What is the demand? Which are the ones that are going to be able to be marketed? What are the quotas going to be? What fertilizers am I going to use? It looks like a dry year, should I be fertilizing? What chemicals? These are all serious, economic problems and decisions that these farmers must be making.

I think Mr. Speaker, that if the government opposite is a government that is truly concerned with the welfare of the Saskatchewan farmers, it would certainly support the motion brought forward by my colleague for Souris-Cannington. I must say that I am shocked that the Minister of Agriculture or some of the members on that side of the House who represent farm communities (especially the member for Melville and the member for Yorkton) in that deprived area of the province where they have been suffering didn't come forward from your side of the House to urge your minister to make recommendation to the Canadian Wheat Board immediately. Therefore, I am pleased to second the motion and mend it by adding:

That this Assembly urge the Canadian Wheat Board to announce the initial prices forthwith, based on the best information available to date.

MR. ENGEL: — Mr. Speaker, I have been listening to the comments of both the leader and his side-kick on this motion. This motion is very important to the people of my

riding. I have discussed this with a number of farmers; I have been looking at some of the concerns. I am worried as to whether the member for Indian Head-Wolseley is really thinking of the young farmers, or if he maybe thinks he can get a jab in at orderly marketing and maybe get a little jab in at the Canadian Wheat Board for not making up its mind right now.

I admit that the federal government is indicating another example of failure, as far as responding to a commitment to us that they would tell us well in advance of seeding what the initial price was going to be. Should I seed durum or should I seed spring wheat or should I go for barley this year? I think that's a key question.

Another key question and another commitment that the federal government has reneged on is its commitment to say whether we lost any money as far as the embargo is concerned. There's \$100 million at stake there that the western farmer is concerned about. But at the same time, we, as NDPers, are concerned about the uncertainty this presents, and the uncertainty that exists out in the agricultural community, as far as not announcing the initial payment is concerned.

I think we can get after Senator Argue, our minister responsible for the wheat board, as he stated in a news conference on Friday the 13th that he would be delaying the announcement. Senator Argue is a worthwhile target for criticism. I'm sure all of us agree on that. But do not forget, it's the Canadian Wheat Board that advises this minister as to when he should make an announcement and what kind of announcement he should make. Argue said at the March 13 news conference, and I quote from the *Leader-Post* story of March 14:

Although the board won't release the size of the initial payments for the 1981-1982 crop year until late June or early July, Argue said that the board will be in a better position to assess the market if it waits.

I don't think it should wait until June or July to make that announcement. Argue is stating accurately, though, that the Canadian Wheat Board must make a precise and complex decision in announcing their initial price. They have to make that decision. The wheat board is trying, right at the present time, to size up the world market.

And what is the situation as far as the world market is concerned? The wheat-producing countries of the southern hemisphere are in the midst of a harvest right now. They are harvesting a big crop, much larger than it has been for the last two or three years. The drought in Australia has obviously eased; Argentina is taking off a good crop. But what's the weather going to be like in North America? Sure, we had a little snow last night, but will we have another dry year? Will we have a March blizzard? Who can tell us? What are the prospects for marketing our grain? All of us know that the wheat board has been busy and has been selling a lot of grain at a reasonably good price. We don't know what the prospects are going to be as far as the price in the future is concerned, so I would urge the board to tell the farmers before it's time to seed, and I think they've maybe got three weeks to a month, at the maximum, to do that. I would like to see them make that decision.

We've been told that the oats production is up by 6 per cent; the board forecasts also that rapeseed, flax and durum wheat acreages should not be increased; the board expects summer fallow to be down by 13 per cent this year, and seeded acreage to be up from 800,000 acres to a million acres; and the board expects to export about 16

million tonnes this coming year.

On the basis of those figures and in the light of that, I think we should give them time to make a decision, but I feel very strongly that we should urge them to make the decision well before seeding time. The farmers need to know prior to seeding and I agree with that aspect of the motion, Mr. Speaker. I think we should urge Hazen Argue to get off his pedestal and decide just what the initial price is going to be before May or June, as he announced at his press conference.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SWAN: — Mr. Speaker, I think the member opposite was trying to make a political football out of a very serious concern that has been raised by this side of the House. This side of the House was not taking any cracks at the Canadian Wheat Board; we were taking cracks at the minister in charge. He gets his directions, not only from the Canadian Wheat Board which can provide the figures, but from the federal cabinet. When the federal cabinet says he can't make an announcement, then he doesn't make it. What we are encouraging you to do is to get together as a group in this legislature to make a very important decision for the people who are farming in the province of Saskatchewan.

To say that we don't need the information for four or five weeks, I think is absolutely wrong. If a man is going to make plans now to plan, starting in mid-April or late April or May 1, he has to know now so he can buy his seed and fertilizer and make the arrangements to go out to plant. You don't get the word one day, then start planting the next.

This is a very serious matter, Mr. Speaker. Farmers over the last few years have been given some indication by the wheat board as to what the initial payments and the initial quotas for each grain would be. They, at no time, have come out with an exact amount which would be the final amount of the grain price for the year. They have come out with an initial payment, and sometimes they have adjusted that payment upward as early as the first two weeks of August. But at least we have had some indication it would not be below a certain level. That's what we are asking for. We are asking that the government provide that type of information to Saskatchewan farmers so they can make the proper decisions when it is time to plan their crops this spring. I urge the members opposite to support the motion, so that we can, indeed, as a legislature, put forward a position to the Canadian government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BYERS: — Mr. Speaker, I want to offer a few comments in support of the motion and the amendment which is before the Assembly, not only because I represent a constituency where a good amount of wheat is produced in this province, but because most of the people in my constituency rely mainly on the farm economy for their livelihood. The fact that the initial price for wheat has not, on March 18, been announced by the minister responsible for the wheat board, is certainly causing a great deal of concern throughout the farm community. I think the procrastination and the delay illustrates, very clearly, how far out of touch the member of the federal government are with the rural scene.

Some of us older chaps in this Assembly can recall, very vividly, farmers actually being

on the land on April 1. It is not an unusual situation, at least in the prairies in dry years. It is causing concern among the farmers because there are a great many decisions which have to be made. The nature of farming has certainly changed dramatically in this province within the last 10 years. The cropping practices have changed dramatically within the last decade. Continuous cropping is becoming very common practice and there are some very hard decisions which farmers have to make. The *Leader-Post* tried to convey some of this information to the farmers and to the public yesterday to illustrate the kind of costs of inputs which farmers face with nitrogen fertilizer costs. Fertilizer 46-0-0 this year retails at about \$380 per tonne. Standard 11-48-0 fertilizer, which farmers use, retails at around \$280 per tonne . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Those are approximate figures. Tonne — just for the record.

The cost of producing an acre of wheat today, counting the overhead and the operating costs for a farmer, in many cases can approach \$150 per acre. Therefore, the farmer has to make some very hard decisions as to what his cropping pattern is going to be. You then have to add to that the prospects of drought. The *Grain News* just published a chart this week (and there are other publications coming out), which shows that there are only very small portions of the prairie grain belt where the moisture conditions are adequate.

The farmer, then, is faced with the problem of having to make these hard choices with the uncertainty as to what the initial price will be, and faced with the uncertainties and the vagaries of the weather. It puts him in a position which most people would not like to have to cope with.

The minister responsible for the wheat board, Mr. Argue, has argued in the West that he has great success in persuading his federal colleagues to accept the recommendations that he makes to them. That has been one of his standard lines in the period in which he has served in his present capacity. I suggest to him, respectfully, that it's time he puts his money where his mouth is, and make an announcement forthwith as to what the anticipated initial price will be.

It isn't necessary to belabor many of the members of this House with the facts as they are on the farm. I know that most members are aware of the conditions as they are on the farm. Perhaps some of us farm members sometimes take for granted that the problems faced by the farmers are really as horrendous and as deeply appreciated as they actually are.

But, Mr. Speaker, I have observed the operations of the federal government for many years. I have always been a very strong advocate of the Canadian Wheat Board. I suppose that was born into me; I was raised with it. I tell the members of this House that I remember very vividly, while still a student in school, that it was my grandfather who went to Ottawa on that delegation in 1942 to seek dollar wheat, and to have the federal government put the sale of wheat under the wheat board. Perhaps I have been raised in an environment that was slightly different from some of the members opposite, but I have always been a very strong advocate of the orderly marketing system. I think that this action by the federal government is really another attack on the whole orderly marketing system. The farmers in my constituency have spent much of their spare time in the last two or three years trying to save some of their rail lines. The Kelvington-Preeceville line is one whose future has been uncertain. This winter we just had the CTC (Canadian Transport Commission) hearings at Wishart in an attempt to save that branch line. The indecision of the federal government, with respect to such matters as the retention of rail lines that serve an obvious need to the farmers and communities of

rural Saskatchewan, has gone on since Mr. Diefenbaker set up the MacPherson commission in 1959 that initially recommended the abandonment of these railroads. This is simply a continuation of the lack of desire on the part of the federal government to provide an adequate rail line system, as well as their uncertainties as to the future of the orderly marketing system.

We know that our friend, Mr. Jean-Luc Pepin, is far from fully persuaded that the crowrate ought to be retained as a service to the farmers of western Canada. It is clear, I think, from this inaction by the federal government in delaying announcing the initial payment, that the federal government perhaps isn't really getting what message our minister responsible for the wheat board is taking back to Ottawa, or that he is not really reflecting the true feelings of the farmers of western Canada. One can conjecture what motives the federal government has in delaying this decision. But given their past record of indecision with rail line abandonment and the future of the crow, one can only assume that this is yet another means by which they are trying to shaft the wheat board system and the whole orderly marketing system in western Canada. I think this act can clearly be interpreted as an attack on the orderly marketing system, as such, because the initial payment is certainly an essential element of an orderly marketing system.

It is with regret that the farmers are faced with this uncertainty at this time, as the spring planting season nears, and I have no hesitation whatever in supporting the resolution and the amendment which will urge an early decision, and an early announcement, with respect to the initial payment for the upcoming crop year.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. GARNER: — Mr. Speaker, it's a little bit disappointing entering into this debate when I hear the former speaker talk about what happened in 1940 and 1950 and talking about the crowrate and orderly marketing. We want to talk about the farmers of Saskatchewan today, 1981. The initial prices that should be announced today are not going to have any effect on what happened in 1940, or on the crowrate, or anything else. This is just what my colleague said — the NDP is a party of the past. If the other member from the other side of the House starts talking about the crops in South America. Our farmers are concerned about the initial price in Saskatchewan, and they want to know it today. They're cleaning grain today. They're not concerned about what the crop is like in Australia. I sure want to try to take the highroad on this. In this Assembly, in this spring session, anything that is urgent or pressing on behalf of the farmers or cattlemen in Saskatchewan today has to be brought up by the Progressive Conservative opposition. The motions for priority of debate are not coming from the government or from the Minister of Agriculture. He is the one who is supposed to be responsible to the people in Saskatchewan. They are not coming from him. I'm getting concerned, Mr. Speaker, and I know the people in rural Saskatchewan are getting concerned.

Now, first of all, if these initial prices are not announced until June or July, as Mr. Argue stated the other day, it's too late, because the crops are already in the ground. And there are also the inflationary prices the farmer faces today, whether they may be in fertilizer, herbicide, or the outrageous price that fuel is going to be in this coming year. I don't think there are any farmers who can budget for the cost of fuel in this coming year.

These are increased production costs, Mr. Speaker, to the farmers of Saskatchewan, and they have to make every possible dollar out of every acre they seed this spring in order to break even and be able to make payments next year. This is very important. It

should not be brought in to be political. We don't have to deal with the crowrate or what happened in 1940. Let's deal with the problem here today.

You see, Mr. Speaker, I'm trying to stay on the highroad. We're not condemning the wheat board. We're not condemning the crowrate. We're talking about initial prices to be announced by the federal government. When are you birds going to get that through your heads? I don't see how any member of this Assembly cannot vote for this very important motion. But I am a little concerned because, as you are no doubt aware, we did do a priority of debate before. We have not heard back yet on the herd maintenance program from the federal government.

Mr. Argue (and it goes right back to Senator Argue's ball park again) stated that there was going to be an announcement made on Monday. Once again, we have 6,000 farmers or 10,000 farmers in Saskatchewan waiting for that part of the federal government to act. Now, we have all the grain farmers in Saskatchewan waiting for them to act on this. Hopefully, we will get unanimous consent from this House and support from every member in this Chamber for this very important motion. And hopefully, the federal government will act on it.

MR. MUIRHEAD: — Mr. Speaker, as I enter into this debate you'll have to have sympathy for my throat. I won't be able to yell at anyone today.

I wish to thank the opposition for agreeing to go into this debate. I'm sorry, I mean the government. They act like opposition sometimes. But what else could they do, as representatives of the Government of Saskatchewan, when something as important as this is being discussed. Together, we must get word to Mr. Argue that we have to have the initial price set for 1981, and it must be set immediately.

I am disappointed with several remarks I am hearing from the other side. Just because the opposition wants to have this price set immediately, they start talking about crowrate and the Canadian Wheat Board. What in the world does this have to do with it? I am very disappointed with the heckles coming from that side of the House.

Everyone on this side of the House is in favour of the Canadian Wheat Board. We are against the bureaucrats and politicians who run the wheat board. Right now that is Mr. Hazen Argue. What disappoints me is why the Minister of Agriculture, even if he is not here today, didn't make this motion instead of us. I am absolutely sure in our debate we will come out together on this. There is just no way, Mr. Speaker, that anyone on that side of the House could be against the farmer in Saskatchewan knowing what the price is going to be. This precedent was set by Mr. Otto Lang some years ago when he was petitioned by farmers to let them know before seeding time approximately what the price of grain was going to be for the following year so they would know what to seed.

Mr. Speaker, this coming year could be a disaster year. It is drier than it was a year ago. When you get a dry year, farmers have a tendency to seed mainly wheat. They will stay away from oil seeds. What I hear from the farmers is that wheat will mainly be sown, probably some barley and oats for feed. But if the price of grain is going to drop at the end of July or the beginning of August, then some people will have to revert to oil seeds. If they don't know, this is really going to be hard on the Saskatchewan farmers.

Another reason it is important we work together to see that Mr. Argue comes up with an answer and that he reverses his position is because this is one of the worst times in history for inflation and high interest rates. The farmers need to know what goals to set

for the 1981 crop year.

Mr. Argue has done quite a few things since he has been minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board which have gone against the farmers of Saskatchewan. If this were not so, surely we could find a farmer somewhere in Saskatchewan who would say that Mr. Argue is right on. We can't find anyone to say that. Mr. Argue interfered in the herd maintenance program and it has turned out to be a real mix-up. I was talking to that office this morning. They are hoping to get those blunders settled and get more cash into the hands of the farmers very quickly.

If, in this Assembly, we cannot urge Mr. Argue to reverse his position, then we will have very disturbed farmers in Saskatchewan. The feeling out in the country is that the grain market in North America has been a buyers' market. In North America in the last few weeks, it has begun to turn to a sellers' market. I imagine this is frightening to the wheat board and it will not take a gamble. It doesn't know which way it is going. It is worried whether 1981 will be a buyers' or sellers' market. The only way it is going to change one way or the other is by the crops which will be produced in North America, mainly the United States after their big crop last year. If he can't give the answer today, there is no way he can give it at least into June, until we see how the rain is in North America in the grain area, which is too late. If you get past April 15 or April 20, that date is too late because the farmers will be cleaning their seed. We must, Mr. Speaker, come to a decision immediately.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I urge all people to vote for this motion. Thank you.

Amendment agreed.

Debate continues on the motion as amended.

HON. MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, it was with some concern that I listened on March 14 when the Hon. Hazen Argue announced that he would be delaying the announcement of the initial price for grain in Saskatchewan and in western Canada, and what that will do for the planning of farmers, in particular in Saskatchewan and in my area of Shaunavon, which is mainly a farming area. I think we are all in agreement in this Assembly that the process which was practised in the past, where the initial price was announced and farmers made their plans, was a good one, and is one which we all endorsed and supported. If anything, Mr. Speaker, I think that we have to make the point that the initial payment should be higher and announced sooner, rather than going the other way. I think the point made by the member who talked earlier about this being another attack on western Canada is certainly adequate, accurate, and well-informed.

It is included in a long list of things which we in western Canada are being asked to face as farmers at the present time. The ongoing drought which started last year, and which we are still in the middle of, is nagging at the conscience of every farmer in western Canada. But I think that I would like to make the point that it is not only farmers who are expressing concern about the lack of the announcement of an initial price. I have had calls from business people in my community who are concerned because their only reason for being in the towns of Shaunavon and Climax and Ponteix is the farmers. They are very concerned that the farmers are cutting back on what they are purchasing because they don't know where the money is going to come from.

I think in the area of orderly marketing, which is the basis of this whole debate, we have

to look at the fact that part of the real reasoning behind the minister's decision to not announce the initial price is another attack on orderly marketing in Canada. I think that, if anything, we should be increasing orderly marketing in Canada, including in our beef production and many other areas, as we have always supported in this party. I think the many problems which I mentioned that are facing young farmers, many who are there because of government programming in Saskatchewan, are very important. The fact that more farmers under 25 are presently farming in Saskatchewan than is the total in Alberta and Manitoba is another point to consider when we are talking about announcing the initial prices. The fact is that these people under 25 are those most affected by the lack of an announcement.

I don't think this takes a great deal of discussion, Mr. Speaker. To that end, I would like to move an amendment to the motion that would read, following the word "date" on the final line:

and further that in order to ensure that all farmers receive full advance price information on all grains, and a fair and just price for their grain, this Assembly urges the federal government to place the marketing of all grains in western Canada under the jurisdiction of the Canadian Wheat Board.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BERNTSON: — Well, the point of order, simply, Mr. Speaker, is that I think when you review that particular subamendment, you will find that it is out of order in accordance with section 438 of Beauchesne's, page 155:

The purpose of a subamendment (an amendment to an amendment) is to alter the amendment; it should not enlarge upon the scope of the amendment but it should deal with matters that are not covered by the amendment; . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Would the members give me a few moments please?

We are dealing with the motion as amended. Therefore what we have before us is an amendment, and the amendment was read by the member who moved it.

I find the amendment which is offered in order and debate continues concurrently on the motion as amended, and the amendment.

MR. KATZMAN: — I understand from several of the rulings you have made in the last couple of days, that an amendment cannot extend the scope of what the original motion is, and the final lines of that motion enlarge the scope and, therefore, makes that motion out of order because it increases the scope of the original motion the same as . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — As I stated at another time in this House, there are a number of regulations and rules which govern amendments. Some of them are:

Every amendment must be relevant to the question upon which it is proposed. Every amendment must be intelligible . . . (and) while the purpose of an amendment is to render a proposition more acceptable to the Assembly, an amendment cannot be used to accomplish the same thing as

would be accomplished by the simple defeat of the main motion.

An amendment is out of order if it proposes to alter any part of a proposition upon which the Assembly has already expressed an opinion, or if the substance of the amendment itself has already been submitted to the judgment of the Assembly.

An amendment, even if it is in order in all other respects, is out of order if its substance lies beyond the competence of the Assembly.

I would suggest to the members of the Assembly that the amendment which is offered here conforms with all of those conditions which govern amendments which may be added.

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Speaker, on the statement you just made, for clarification, if I may, I understand that each time you have ruled in this House, you have said you cannot enlarge a motion out of the original intent. The intent of the original motion and the amendment which was passed referred to the price of the initial payment. You have now increased it to the marketing system, which is not part of that original content and you have now enlarged the area. Therefore, I think, for that reason the motion is out of order.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order. The member for Rosthern, when he originally stood, was making a citation with regard to subamendments. This is not a subamendment. I thought I heard the member say rule 438. All right, I have made . . . Order.

I have made my decision with regard to the amendment. The amendment is in order and debate will proceed concurrently on the motion as amended, and the amendment.

Before I go on, I would ask the mover of the motion for the seconder.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Seconded by the hon. member for Morse.

MR. BERNTSON: — Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I wonder just how it is we can have a motion in order without a seconder.

MR. SPEAKER: — I will say to the Leader of the Opposition that I just made a technical adjustment to his particular motion. I have made other technical adjustments; I have sent motions back to members to get them signed on both sides of the House, and I think it ill behoves the members of this House to spend needless amounts of time on picayune things which have no relation to the debate whatsoever. I suggest we get on with the debate and I'll take the member for Morse.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. GROSS: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I agree with you that it's a picky little point the opposition tried to raise. The debate itself does not require a great deal of time, Mr. Speaker, it's an important issue that speaks for itself.

I think we, as farmers in western Canada, have all become used to the practice and the principle that the Canadian Wheat Board has lived very long with, the practice of early initial price announcements. I don't think it takes a great deal of enlightenment to explain why that happens. The reason, of course, is that it gives farmers plenty of time to

make decisions with regard to spring planting plans and, indeed for their entire crop year.

I think the other important reason we have early announcements on the price is to give an indication to farmers what type of grain to seed for the following year. That, in many cases, is a more important decision than even the price.

The pronouncements made, Mr. Speaker, by the members opposite, cut a lot deeper than why we are not getting an initial price announcement early in the year. The pronouncements cut a lot deeper because, Mr. Speaker, that is their way. That is the way the Tory party has used over the year, very successfully, I might add, to cut deep into the concept of orderly marketing. It has always been a practice of the Tory party opposite, and of Liberal governments in Ottawa, to pick away at the Canadian Wheat Board. They've picked away at it for many, many years, and this little display of cheap politics that we have had here today is another example of the way Tories have been consistently picking away at orderly marketing.

They have made it their task, and they have made it their claim to fame in life, to go around the country talking about the inadequacies of the Canadian Wheat Board, talking about whether or not they should be announcing prices earlier or later than they generally do. I agree it's an important issue and prices should be announced early in the spring. But, Mr. Speaker, if you've been at any of the debates in the country, you will have noted that Tories have always played off the Canadian Wheat Board against the private system. They've always told the people of the province how much better it would be with the private system, and how ineffective and inoperative the Canadian Wheat Board is. This is just another little example of how they do it.

We cannot always be critical of the Tories opposite for their approach to orderly marketing, because the Liberal Party of Canada is also guilty in this respect. The very fact that Hazen Argue has delayed the announcement is another indication that the Canadian Wheat Board is not foursquare with orderly marketing. The fact that they would delay the announcement and anger farmers and make it increasingly difficult to run a successful operation is another indication that the Liberal government, like the Conservative Party opposite, is against the orderly marketing system.

You know, Mr. Speaker, it is going to be very interesting to see the people who vote on this amendment. It's going to be very interesting to watch how the Tories opposite are going to support this amendment.

While the debate was going on, there was knife-jabbing back and forth, Mr. Speaker. The Tories were telling us how they support the Canadian Wheat Board, how they are not undermining the Canadian Wheat Board by this little tactic, how they believe in orderly marketing . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The member for Moosomin is a great believer in the orderly marketing system. I'm going to listen and watch very carefully when we have the vote on this amendment to see if you're going to put all grains under the Canadian Wheat Board, to see if you'll support an amendment to the main motion saying that all grains should be under the Canadian Wheat Board when you've been rattling around in the last few minutes telling us what a great supporter of the Canadian Wheat Board you are. We're going to want to see it.

The member for Thunder Creek, Colin Thatcher — the great free-enterpriser, the great open-marketeer, the great supporter of the Cargill Grain Company — the number of speeches we've listened to in this House where he has condemned us for our approach

in regard to Cargill grain and said what a great operation it is. I want to see how he's going to vote on the amendment to put all grains under the Canadian Wheat Board. I can guarantee you one thing, Mr. Speaker: the member for Moosomin and the member for Arm River are going to be voting against putting all grains under the Canadian Wheat Board. They are going to be indicating once again their solid opposition to orderly marketing. The inference they would like us to draw that they are supporters of the Canadian Wheat Board is indeed false, and is indeed inaccurate.

We had a great lecture some weeks ago about the member for Arm River, who has just left the House, being a great emissary on behalf of Saskatchewan farmers. He was down in Ottawa in bed with Eugene Whelan trying to solve all the problems of the Saskatchewan farmers. When this amendment passes, as it will, I'm sure, I think we should suggest that the member for Arm River carry it down to Ottawa as well, proposing that the grains be put under the Canadian Wheat Board. I think that he would do a great service for the farmers of this province if he would do that. He should show us his great negotiating tactics with Hazen Argue, and maybe try to climb in bed with Hazen Argue and see how successful he is there. He claims to have a great amount of success with Eugene Whelan. I think we are going to want to see how he performs with Hazen Argue.

I'm sure the member for Arm River and a lot of the members across the way will not be supporting this amendment. I know that they will not be the emissaries of Saskatchewan farmers. I know for a fact that they will not be making the cause to have grains placed entirely in the orderly marketing system very strongly or loudly. I know, and I know that many farmers in this province know, that they are not great supporters of the Canadian Wheat Board. Farmers in this province will also know that this cheap shot, which the Tories have just tried to make in the last few minutes of the debate, is made to bring alarm and dismay to Saskatchewan taxpayers. That the Canadian Wheat Board is acting somehow mysteriously in the dark, that mysteriously it's not doing its job, that mysteriously it's not fulfilling the need that is there — all this will be well read by Saskatchewan farmers and they'll know that it is just another attack and it is another pronouncement by the Tory party against the system of orderly marketing.

I think members on this side of the House to a man will be supporting the amendment. I know on that side of the House there will be not one single member support the amendment, because those people across the way do not support orderly marketing. They never have; they never will. And they will prove it when this amendment is taken to a vote because they will not support the concept of putting all grains under the Canadian Wheat Board.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. KOWALCHUK: — Mr. Speaker, it's with a great deal of pleasure that I rise to enter this debate which was brought about by the Leader of the Opposition this afternoon. I think it is a very important item that we should be discussing. I want to compliment the member for Shaunavon for bringing in the amendment. I think it's very apt, and the kind of amendment that will really and truly show just where the Conservatives stand.

I was a bit disappointed with the seconder of the motion, the member for Indian Head-Wolseley. He made the suggestion that the members for Melville and all that area, which has had a drought over the last number of years, didn't seem to be concerned. I hear a remark that they still are not. Well, I can see the Conservative's concern because, just as soon as the mover and the seconder and the member for Rosetown-Elrose

finished their participation, they rushed outside to the TV cameras and we didn't see them for 15 minutes. Now, if they were really interested in this debate they'd all be sitting here, too, and listening. I say, Mr. Speaker, that shows the extent of their interest.

Furthermore, I want to reply to the matter about the member for Melville, as stated by the member for Indian Head-Wolseley, not being concerned with agricultural matters in the constituency of Melville. I recall some 14 years ago there was a Liberal cabinet minister from Milestone who got up in this House and made the statement to the member for Melville, "I'll see to it that you won't be there come the next election." Well, I was there. I have been here for three elections after that and he is long gone.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. KOWALCHUK: — And I say to you, Mr. Speaker, and to the members on that side, their time of tenure is not that long either. I think they had better be careful as to who is going to be here come the next election. I want to say that the Conservatives on that side, and all over, deliberately choose to target in only on certain areas — areas that affect people; areas where people work together. I am suggesting to you, Mr. Speaker, they target in on areas like SGI, Petro-Can, the Canadian Wheat Board, and that type of thing.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. KOWALCHUK: — The Conservative motions are evidence as to where they want to go. They are simple and pure free enterprise. Their concern is with Pioneer Grain and others like Cargills, rather than, let's say, with the Canadian Wheat Board and the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool. I agree that the motion brought about was apt and to the point. I think a great number of us on this side of the House think that it is important for the farmer to know just where he stands this coming spring . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . He won't know the kind of fuel price he will be paying either. He already knows he must pay 25 per cent or 30 per cent or more on the fertilizer. Definitely he will want to know just how much the initial wheat board payments are going to be.

But, Mr. Speaker, for too long the people on that side of the House (as I said before) jump on issues that they think are gong to help their cause. I say that we, as farmers in western Canada, for as long as I can remember, through peace and war, really have been sacrificial lambs to the interests of federal Liberal and Conservative governments. I recall this being very evident during World War II when the farmers did an outstanding job of production and distribution, and gave away millions of dollars worth of food. The government then said, "Just take it easy; take it easy boys; you'll get your rewards when the war is over." Well, it took a might long time for the farmers to get the rewards.

Mr. Speaker, another area which is more current is the position of the federal government. An item that we should be talking about as well is the non-payment of the \$100 million lost by the western farmers due to the federal agreement to the grain embargo. I say, once again, that's part of the whole cost of the wheat. That's part of the whole picture. I think it's the most asinine and ridiculous position when we begin to use food as a means of bargaining in this world. So I say, Mr. Speaker, that there are lots of reasons the Conservatives want to talk about certain things only. They do not like to hear about other things.

I say the wheat board is something that we, as farmers, should be supporting. The amendment proposed is accurate and right. I say the only way we will be able to get some kind of sensible marketing and the realization of where we can go, in so far as budgeting, etc., is by more marketing through the Canadian Wheat Board. I think this is where we are going to watch to see what the Conservatives are going to do. In fact, if it weren't in relation to the topic I just spoke about before, I was going to move an amendment as well, but I didn't and I'm not going to. But I was going to move an amendment, for the same reasons as mentioned in your original motion, that we must vigorously protect the non-decision on the payment of approximately \$100 million lost by western farmers due to the federal government's agreement to the grain embargo, and that payments be forwarded to the farmers immediately.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. KOWALCHUK: — I think that is just as important as the announcement of the initial wheat payment and many other items, as well. So, Mr. Speaker, it's with a great deal of pleasure that I get up to speak as a farmer on this. I'm not a big farmer. I don't own Ford trucks with truck no. 1 and truck no. 2. I just own one truck. It's right out there. I am proud of my record in speaking for the farmers of Melville. I think I've done a good job. I think the record speaks for itself. I certainly will be supporting the amendment and I will be supporting the main motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. HARDY: — It's with a great deal of pleasure and a bit of anxiety, I guess, that I rise here today to speak on the motion we have in this Assembly. I'm a farmer, too. I come from an area where we have been hard-hit not just with the drought of last year but with frost and, usually, with moisture problems. We have too much moisture and last year we were very unfortunate in that we didn't have enough. I, and I think all the farmers in my constituency and across Saskatchewan, and all the members of this Assembly, realize that we must have the initial price we're going to get for our grain before we start planning our seeding.

I'm a farmer and I know the cost of grain or the cleaning of grain, the cost of fertilizer, the type of fertilizer I have to sow, and the cost of fuel. That's the problem within itself — the cost of fuel. It has risen astronomically in the last year or two, and it's going to rise a lot more.

I think all farmers need to know what the initial price of grain will be. I think all farmers now have to be good economists. They have to know not just the direction they're going in but also the price they're going to realize. They have to know how much they're going to be able to spend, whether it be on summer fallow, as in my area, or weed control (which is a great factor in my area, and I'm sure in a lot of areas, especially in the northern part of the province). If we do not know the initial price of the type of grain we're going to plant, we don't know whether we should be putting on Avadex or Treflan or whatever.

I think all people realize that in most areas (maybe not most areas, but in my area and in the northern part of the province) we sow a great variety of grain. We have coarse grains; we have rapeseed; we have wheat. They all have their own little necessities. Rapeseed has to have Treflan in our area or another type of chemical to control wild oats and weeds. I think that, basically, without knowing the price of any of the feed grains or any of the grains in general, it's pretty hard to establish what you should be

sowing and what you should be harvesting.

Mr. Speaker, I realize that the federal government hasn't done enough in the last year to assist farmers. We've had a herd maintenance program which has been badly administered. Now, this is another instance where the farmers of Saskatchewan need to know the initial price of grain. I would like to urge all members of the Assembly to go along with the motion that we brought before us. It's about the urgent and compelling matter of the lack of initial payment information from the Canadian Wheat Board to the prairie farmer which is necessary to intelligently plan spring planting.

I think all of us here who are farmers know that and realize that . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . It's true that Mr. Argue probably has a large number of problems. I just wonder if the real reason he is not announcing the initial price of grain is that, instead of escalating as it has in the last few years, it is levelling off, maybe even starting to drop off. Maybe the market is becoming flooded with this heavy influx of U. S. Grains.

I wonder now, if any of us who are farmers are thinking that if the initial price of grains is not going to be established, it may fall a little bit. I also wonder if my farmer friends out there, and your farmer friends are thinking the same thing. It has to be a worry, not just for me, but for them, too. I would feel badly if the price of grain fell, not just because of the farming picture, but because it will relate to every one of us.

There is just one more thing I would like to say. I think that probably the whole Assembly, and I'll address it that way, has made this into a political football. I don't think this is a political football; this is something the farmers of Saskatchewan need and deserve. I think we should forget the politics and move this thing forward in a definite direction. The only direction we can have is to get the initial price of grain established, and I would urge all of the Assembly to vote on that.

HON. MR. McARTHUR: — Mr. Speaker, it's really a pleasure for me to be entering this debate. It's not often that I have the opportunity to debate an important subject relating to our most important industry, namely, agriculture. Certainly, Mr. Speaker, I would be the first to agree that the cattle farmers, with whom I have a great deal of familiarity (as the hon. member for Thunder Creek knows), as well as the grain farmers, are facing some rather difficult times with the rising costs they now encounter, with the tremendous complexities of farming today, and with the difficulties in terms of assuring that they receive a fair and adequate price for their products.

I believe it is important that this legislature debate this particular subject, free of politics and with a real concern for what the real and important issues are. I welcome the fact, Mr. Speaker, that this issue has come before this legislature, because I think it does give us the opportunity (and I certainly appreciate this, from my background in farming, and in the field of agriculture) to talk about some of the very important questions that we must deal with in terms of Saskatchewan farmers.

I would say to you, Mr. Speaker, looking at the uncertainty of the weather, the uncertainty of markets, and the uncertainty of prices, that the opportunity for farmers to have the best possible pricing information from which to work is critical.

Mr. Speaker, I think this points out to you the importance of talking about this resolution and the amendment in the terms that we are debating here. The hon. members on both sides of the House have indicated something that really goes right back to the early days of the formation of the Canadian Wheat Board, and that is that

price uncertainty in an uncertain market is something that is very, very difficult for farmers to deal with.

The Canadian Wheat Board was brought into place in order to try to ensure that farmers in Saskatchewan would have some security, some protection and some equity in terms of price, and that through the system of pooling and initial payments, they would have the best information possible in advance about what they might be able to expect in terms of price.

Now, the original farmers, all across this province, some of whom I'm sure sit in this legislature, and who worked hard to support and develop this concept of orderly marketing, understood very clearly that the opportunity to assess what would be happening in terms of price in the future when their grain was marketed, was something the Canadian Wheat Board could do and could do well, because they were working in an orderly marketing context. They were a single seller on the world market; they had advanced information; and they had knowledge of their markets.

The farmers who worked for the Canadian Wheat Board understood, Mr. Speaker, at the time they set it up, that the only way you could make that work well would be to ensure that all grains were included under the Canadian Wheat Board so that farmers could do exactly what the hon. members on both sides of this House have been saying today, and that is, so they could compare the likely best estimate of expected returns from the different kinds of grains that they might produce, and out of that make some good judgments with regard to planting and seeding decisions.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the unfortunate part of history, with respect to the Canadian Wheat Board, is that some people with vested interests in this country and in western Canada have undertaken to try to undermine that system. They have tried, systematically, to see that a lower, lower, and lower proportion of the grains produced in this area are marketed under the Canadian Wheat Board. In doing so, Mr. Speaker, they have, through time, reduced the amount and number of grains for which farmers can get this kind of advanced information. That, to me, indicates one of the difficulties we have today.

We have the difficulty of the Canadian Wheat Board not being able to deal in a marketing sense with all of the grains produced. As a result of that, we have a situation where the Canadian Wheat Board, regardless of the date that the federal government gives authority to announce the initial payments, cannot provide initial payment information on all of the grains produced. As a result of that, farmers, looking at their seeding decisions, have to deal with certainty, even if we can get early announcements, only on part of their grain production. They, on the other part of their grain production, (feed grains, oil seeds, and so on) have to deal with uncertain information coming from an open market for grain. That market is open to manipulation and manoeuvring by all kinds of private vested interests, supported by the members opposite, which deny to the farmers the kind of information that the hon. members themselves are saying farmers should have.

They criticized Mr. Argue, the minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, fairly and rightly, for interfering in such a way as not to permit farmers to have this advance information at this time. But do they criticize their friends in the Winnipeg Grain

Exchange and the Chicago Grain Exchange for their role in this? Do they criticize Cargill Grain for fighting tooth and nail to ensure that all oil seeds and feed grains do not come under the Canadian Wheat Board so that farmers can have this advance information? No, they do not, Mr. Speaker. It shows the inconsistency in their argument.

They don't want farmers to have advance information on all grains marketed. They don't want the farmers to have that. That's what this resolution says. That's what they would have us believe when they introduced this motion. But, look at where they stand. They don't want farmers to have all that because they say, "Oh, it's great if we can criticize Mr. Argue and try to use him for political purposes," (with which they say they want nothing to do). But, when their friends, who support and pay their bills are involved, they say, "Oh, that's not an issue, no problem. In fact, we agree that rapeseed and feed grains should stay under the open market and farmers should be denied advance pricing information, because those are our friends. We're supporting our friends, and we don't want to take away their opportunities to earn huge and manifestly unacceptable profits from the marketing of grains on the open market."

At least two hon. members had the nerve to stand there and say, "This is a motion that we want to debate on its merits." They say, "This is a motion that we want to debate on the basis that all farmers should have advance information on all grains." But, if you read the record they then say — unless they are going to change their position a little later here, and I'm interested in hearing it — "except for those grains that are marketed by our friends, the private grain trade." Then they say, "No, no. We don't want advanced initial prices under the Canadian Wheat Board. We don't want farmers having that kind of information, because to do so, we'd have to take the grain away from our friends on the grain exchange."

Mr. Speaker, that is what is fundamentally at stake here in this debate. Do the hon. members agree or not with the proposition that farmers should have advance price information on all grains? I'll leave the other issues on the Canadian Wheat Board separate from that. You tell me whether you agree with that. If you agree with that — and I say you must agree with that if you introduce this motion, which you did — then you must stand up and vote for this motion so that farmers can have that information for all of their grains.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. McARTHUR: — Mr. Speaker, I find it very interesting — the very weak attempt by the members opposite to introduce this resolution, and to claim that they are concerned that the federal minister in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board should not be manipulating his power for political purposes. I agree with that entirely. I think that it is regrettable that ministers responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board make announcements with respect to initial, interim and final payments in order to gain political advantage from money that belongs to the grain farmers. I think that is absolutely regrettable. If Senator Argue is withholding these announcements — which I tend to believe could be true, as advanced by the hon. members here — for political purposes, I think that is contemptible.

Mr. Speaker, it's interesting to note how this whole matter began, if one looks back in history. You ask, "What politicians have been involved in utilizing and manipulating the Canadian Wheat Board for political advantage?"

I would suggest that hon. members on both sides of the House go back in history a little

bit, and look at the days of the Canadian Wheat Board in the late 1950s and the early 1960s. At that time, the Canadian Wheat Board was operated by commissioners who were highly independent of government. They marketed practically all the grain in western Canada. Then what happened? In 1957 there was a federal Tory government elected. Mr. Speaker, I would advance the proposition that the beginning of the erosion, for political purposes and political advantage, of the base of the Canadian Wheat Board started with the election of that federal Tory government.

We can all remember the then minister in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board taking over the announcement of the initial and final payments from the Canadian Wheat Board during the days of the federal Tory government in Ottawa. We can remember the first attack on the right of the Canadian Wheat Board and the responsibility of the Canadian Wheat Board to market feed grains. That doesn't go back to 1972. No, Mr. Speaker, it goes back to 1962, when the federal Tory government transferred the marketing of feed grains to feed mills in Canada from the Canadian Wheat Board, and opened it to a so-called free and open market. That was a major attack upon the basis of operation of the Canadian Wheat Board. It was undertaken by a federal Tory government. They manipulated the Canadian Wheat Board the whole time they were in office. Regrettably, they established a pattern that the federal Liberal and Conservative governments have followed ever since.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that all of us in this House should stand up and reject that. I agree with the Ottawa members that we should reject any attempt by Senator Argue, and all other attempts, to manipulate these prices.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. McARTHUR: — Mr. Speaker, coming back to my earlier theme — the hon. members on the opposite side can come back to the earlier theme. They want the farmers to have advance information, through initial prices on grain, so that farmers can make these choices which the members have talked about. The farmers can then see the different initial prices on the grain.

I want to ask the hon. members: where were you in 1972 when feed grains were placed on the open market? Mr. Speaker, where were they when a plebiscite was held here in Saskatchewan in order to achieve this very aim of putting oil seeds under the Canadian Wheat Board? I recall it very clearly, because I was working in the field of agriculture at that time. I was deputy minister of agriculture. I remember very clearly the Liberal members and the Tory party of this province fighting tooth and nail against everything that was being done to keep feed grains and oil seeds under the Canadian Wheat Board.

They say they want farmers to have that information. Everything they have done proves they do not want that to happen. I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that the people of Saskatchewan should realize that the gentlemen and lady opposite doth protest too much. They say they don't want politics in this debate today. What they have done here today illustrates the most cynical kind of politics I have seen in a long time in dealing with farmers' grain.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. McARTHUR: — Mr. Speaker, I will postpone my judgment on that. I take that back. If the hon. members, this afternoon, will vote for this resolution and the

amendment which we have proposed and, if that is passed here, it will prove their consistency with respect to their intent. Then I am prepared to take all that back and agree that their intent is good and pure. I take back my suggestion at this moment that it was cynical. But, if they vote or do anything with respect to this motion and the amendment in any way to suggest that this amendment should not be passed and brought into play, I will say to you that that is proof positive these members do not believe what they say, that what they are doing here today is cynical politics.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. McARTHUR: — Mr. Speaker, they look very sick and ill to me, so you will excuse me if I have a suspicious mind. They seem not to be very pleased that this motion has been amended in order to bring consistency to it. They seem not to look very comfortable and relaxed by that. I notice that the hon. member, who spoke after introducing this resolution, spoke on the amendment, and referred not once to the amendment. It's interesting. Perhaps they are still sizing up what their position will be, I don't know. I invite all members in this House to drop their self-interest in terms of politics, to drop politicking for their special and privileged friends in the grain exchange or whatever, and to join with all members in this Assembly to unanimously pass this amendment and this motion in order to ensure that what we say we want to do actually does happen, and that is, ensuring that farmers receive, without any political interference on the part of the federal minister, advanced price information on all grains marketed in western Canada through the announcement of initial prices. The only way that can be done is to ensure that we have the wheat board taking responsibility for all grains, and making those announcements on a timely basis. Mr. Speaker, I will be voting for the motion as amended.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise in this Assembly on such an urgent matter, brought before us by my colleagues. I think we all agree that it is a very serious thing when we are facing hard decisions on the prairies. The announcement by the minister in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board is going to severely restrict our farmers in the basic management decisions which they have to make. I am very pleased that my colleagues brought this forward and I think it is something which merits a debate in this Assembly. Hopefully, a very clear message will come from this Assembly and go to the wheat board minister.

I regret to see that the former deputy hack (pardon me, the former deputy minister of agriculture) is leaving, because I had some comments for him. I sincerely hope that this Assembly will send a very clear message to Wheat Board Minister Argue regarding our disapproval.

Mr. Speaker, this, as I have indicated, is a very worth-while motion. Try as I may, though, as we debate the delay in announcing the initial prices (which we all agree is a very, very important thing in this province) and, reading it as I read it, I fail to see the connection between the wheat board minister's indication of a delay of many months (which was the intent of the original motion) with the amendment put forward by the member for Shaunavon. Somehow it escapes me — the relevancy of this delay to the merits of placing all grain under the Canadian Wheat Board. The logic of this totally escapes me.

To this Assembly I respectfully suggest that in any rules of parliamentary procedure a

motion can certainly be amended. But the basic principle is always that it can be amended provided that amendment does not take away the intent of the original motion.

I suggest to this Assembly today that, by adding this amendment, we are now in the process of debating apples and grapefruit. These two issues are so totally unrelated. Certainly there is no question they are issues. Certainly there is a faction within the agriculture industry that does favour placing all grains under the jurisdiction of the Canadian Wheat Board, and they have every right in the world to have that feeling. But it totally escapes me, Mr. Speaker, as to why we are talking about it in the same context as the delay of the wheat board minister in announcing the initial prices. And I find it very difficult, in the same motion and the same speech, to talk, as I termed it, about apples and grapefruit. I really wonder why we are doing it in this fashion.

Mr. Speaker, the wheat board, in its failure to announce the initial prices for the grains which it has under its jurisdiction . . . It is irrelevant what they are going to have under their jurisdiction at some point in the future, it is what they have right now. In about three weeks, in some areas (and if it stays dry, perhaps even sooner), farmers are going to start planting. They have some pretty hard decisions to make: are they going to follow the oil seed route, the hard wheat route, or the feed grain route? They have some fairly difficult decisions to make. They do have some latitude within that area.

At the present time, the wheat board is exporting grains at Thunder Bay and Vancouver at slightly over \$9 per bushel. I don't have the daily quotes with me, regrettably. Had I known this motion was going to be presented, I would have them. The present initial price under the Canadian Wheat Board is \$6.50 for durum and, I believe, it is \$5.35 for no. 1 hard red spring. I suggest to this Assembly that that is quite a spread that the Canadian Wheat Board is holding back. That, in itself, is a factor that, I believe, a farmer must take into consideration in the coming months: do I want to go the wheat board route? Do I want to tie up that much money for perhaps as long as 18 months, when perhaps I can grow an oil seed crop, take out a contract, and have a pretty good indication of what I am going to take? Mr. Speaker, these are the sorts of decisions, within the latitude farmers have, that they have to make.

Now, Wheat Board Minister Argue, I think, is facing a quandary. I think the administration of the Canadian Wheat Board, under his guidance, has declined to the point where they are not in a position to give any sort of accurate estimate as to what the initial prices should be next August 1. I think, basically, that is the problem. I think there is general agreement in this Assembly that he is the worst wheat board minister in recent years. That covers quite a mouthful.

As a producer, I cringe at the thought of the likes of Hazen Argue representing our wheat farmers at an international wheat conference. What they must think of us in Canada! The yo-yos they must think we are if this character represents us in Washington or goodness knows where else! I shudder to think of it. You can hardly put this guy in the same league as Don Mazankowski. Say what you want about Otto Lang. There are many people who disagreed with him. Nobody is going to dispute the fact that the man had a lot of personal ability. And Hazen Argue is hardly in that league. You can go back through the line of wheat board ministers in the past 20 years, and all of them stand head, shoulders and belt buckle above the present one. But, nonetheless, that is our situation.

I hope this Assembly will very clearly go on record as sending a real note of

condemnation to Hazen Argue for taking away one of the basic management decisions which farmers are going to have to make. And if that is the best he can do, if that is the best the wheat board can do, then it is time for a shake-up, not only at the ministerial level but for the people within the wheat board who are providing this sort of information to Hazen Argue. Certainly, many ministers have announced the price, and even before the crop year started have adjusted it upwards. But at least the farmers had a figure. They had a number on which to base their planting decisions. The fact that they are not going to have it this time raises some very serious questions as to the administration of the wheat board.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is incumbent upon me, as agricultural critic on this side, to take note of the fact that the city boys are now speaking for agriculture on behalf of the government. We regret that some of your rural people in positions of authority have not been available to put forward your position on these agricultural issues. I hear a great deal from the member for Regina Rosemont. There is no question about it. Oh, wasn't that you? I apologize.

AN HON. MEMBER: — I have been asleep for an hour and one-half.

MR. THATCHER: — I agree with the member for Regina Lakeview that it's hard to stay awake. Anyway, it's regrettable that some of the rural members in positions of agricultural authority aren't here to put forward your position and that we have to listen to those from the urban side. I will look forward, after I sit down in a couple of minutes, to hearing from the member for Morse. He could get in on the amendment. Certainly, I want the member for Morse to know that there was nothing wrong with him hauling grain in the open market in the good old days, occasionally. A lot of people did it in your area.

Mr. Speaker, I want to move on to the grapefruit part of this particular motion, and that is the portion which talks about whether all grains should be placed under the jurisdiction of the Canadian Wheat Board. If we are going to talk about grains going under the jurisdiction of the Canadian Wheat Board, we, on this side of the House, have to part company at this stage. We have to part company for a good reason, and that's because we respect the wishes of producers.

Mr. Speaker, I noted the comments from the city boy from Regina Lakeview, who was talking on behalf of producers everywhere. Other than maybe driving into his father's farmyard (his father is a fine gentleman; he has an excellent brother, and I think they're having a little trouble with his new-found philosophy), I really wonder how cognizant he is with agriculture. I think that member's main claim to fame is that he was the deputy minister of agriculture. One of his claims to fame is that he turned one of the most prestigious positions within the public service into what has ever since been a political appointment. In other words, he turned one of the most prestigious jobs into that of a hack. That's his primary claim to fame, because every deputy minister that has followed him has delved into politics and has been virtually an appointment of the New Democratic Party — every single one of them, since the Member for Regina Lakeview held that position.

I recall when he was the deputy minister. I recall where many of his efforts were centred at about the time the wheat board was in the process of providing a vote to the oil seed producers, the flax growers. Do you remember that vote? The Canadian Wheat Board said to the flax growers, "All right, do you want in? Do you want into the Canadian Wheat Board or do you want out?" They gave them a vote on that issue and they gave

them a pretty good time period. The ballots went out to quite a few people who, to say the very least, were stretching a point when they said they were flax growers. The Department of Agriculture in Saskatchewan jumped into it front and centre. They did everything they could to rig that vote. They encouraged people; they put out propaganda; they used taxpayers' dollars to try to influence that vote.

I think history has told us what happened in that vote. The flax growers said, "We don't want into the wheat board. Thank you; thanks for the offer, but we're going to stay out." Does the member for Morse remember that? It was pretty decisive, and that's after all the resources of the Saskatchewan Department of Agriculture were made available to those in favour of putting the flax growers under the Canadian Wheat Board, but in their wisdom, the flax growers said, "Thank you, but we will stay out."

In contrast to government members on that side, we have a tendency to respect those wishes. "If that's what you want, far be it for us to tell you that you've got to be in." We say that it is up to the flax growers to decide. We say that it's not up to a group of urban members to tell the flax growers they're going to join the Canadian Wheat Board. That's your style. That's your style to just tell people, "You're in whether you like it or not."

Conversely, we're not going to tell the rapeseed growers that they should be under the jurisdiction of the Canadian Wheat Board. We part company with you very clearly right there, when you say, "Shove the rapeseed growers into the Canadian Wheat Board." Our position very clearly is that if the rapeseed growers want to go under the jurisdiction of the Canadian Wheat Board, that is their right and there are appropriate mediums where they can express that. Frankly, I don't see any indication of that expression coming forward.

The only place I hear anything on their behalf is from you people on that side. I don't think the rapeseed growers want any part of the Canadian Wheat Board. Their reasons are their own. Far be it for us to tell them that they should join the Canadian Wheat Board. If, in their wisdom, they decide it is to their benefit, I'm sure they will be approaching the Canadian Wheat Board for the appropriate mechanism to express their approval. But if left entirely to themselves, I think it's a pretty safe assessment to say that the rapeseed growers aren't going to be approaching anybody to ask that they be put under the Canadian Wheat Board. I challenge any of you to jump up and dispute that.

I wonder if the lentil growers want to go under the Canadian Wheat Board? Many people grow lentils; even you people have constituents who grow lentils. They've been a pretty popular crop the past two to three years. Why have they become a fairly popular crop? Well, partly because of the shortcomings of the Canadian Wheat Board. The Canadian Wheat Board wasn't able to empty their bins. The Canadian Wheat Board wasn't able, for whatever reason, to get all the wheat out of the prairie provinces and exported, so many farmers were forced to opt for lentils. They were forced by supply, by acreage perhaps, and who knows what else. But they went into lentils.

Is there anybody over there who has ever heard any of the lentil growers saying, "Put us under the Canadian Wheat Board?" I'm waiting, and I haven't heard it.

AN HON. MEMBER: — All my lentil growers want to be under the wheat board.

MR. THATCHER: — I'm listening to the member for Morse indicate that all his lentil

growers want to go under the Canadian Wheat Board. I defy you to document that one, because I don't think you can. I ask the member for Morse: why were you growing lentils? I know many people in your area grow lentils and the next one I hear say, "Put the lentils under the wheat board," will be the first. If the member for Morse says he has them, then I invite him to bring them forward.

None the less, the issue is this: where we part company with you is that we simply are not going to tell anybody that they have to join the Canadian Wheat Board. If you want to join the board, that is purely and simply your decision. There is a proper medium by which you can do so. Go ahead and do it. We will support whichever course of action you take.

Mr. Speaker, again I think we have two very distinct issues here which we are talking about. The motion is a very important one and it's been a gross mistake (I don't mean that in reference to the member for Morse) on the part of the minister responsible for the wheat board, Argue, to make this delay something which farmers have come to take for granted. Basically, it has been made a very integral part of the management decisions which they have to make prior to spring planting.

You are taking a very good, solid issue, one which you know and have acknowledged on your feet as a solid motion, and distorting everything, shoved in this red herring, this grapefruit about orderly marketing and placing all grains under the Canadian Wheat Board. You simply can't take a clear, concise motion which is completely non-political, acknowledge that the opposition has a point to say, "Okay, let's whistle the message off to Hazen. Let's tell him what we really think about him." Heavens, no. We have to put in this old garbage — a political issue in a non-political motion.

You know, that stunt is as old as the hills. You've done it for years and on many occasions you have gotten away with it. Frankly, the only thing I wondered as I saw your amendment was, how did you miss the crowrate? Why didn't you get in something about the crowrate that we could have debated? Why didn't you throw it in? I suppose you've been talking about it.

How did you miss throwing in whether or not we should have a cattle marketing board? It would have had about the same amount of relevance to this original motion. You people are totally incapable of taking something non-political, showing some unity and whistling something off to Hazen Argue which he might understand. Heavens, no. You have to throw in the good old red herring, put politics into it and perhaps even warp the kind of message which we are trying to send down on behalf of the farmers. Members on that side of the House pay lip service to this and to that, but when it comes down to it, the basic consideration which you have over there is not for the farmers, for the taxpayers; it's not for anybody other than the NDP.

The priorities of the NDP supersede everything. Every decision that you make over there is strictly predicated on what is good for the New Democratic Party. On this motion today, I think you should hang your heads in shame. This was a non-political motion, one that may very well have had an impact. You know, there are not very many motions coming out of this Assembly that have very much impact elsewhere; this one was pretty concise. I'm sure your constituents were very annoyed with the wheat board minister because of his announcement. We could have been unified on this one, and could have sent Hazen a message he might not forget for a couple of days. But heavens, no! The priorities of the New Democratic Party come first. Never mind the farmers out there who are having a difficult time. What is good for the New Democratic Party? Heavens! For

the good of the NDP, we couldn't acknowledge that the Conservatives had a good idea. We could never acknowledge that. Let me assure you, were positions reversed, we would have stood, to a man, in support of this motion without amendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the very solid and well-thought out original motion, simply because the amendment has no relationship whatsoever to the motion. We cannot support it. Hopefully the mover and seconder of that amendment on that side of the House will reconsider, and pull that amendment back. Let's send off a true, clear, crisp message to Hazen Argue that he'll understand. Let's not cloud it in a sea of NDP politics. I will support the original motion.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think it is very unfortunate that I have to enter this debate. The motion should have been clear even to the minds of the members opposite. But, obviously, they can't seem to see any merit in the motion that we put before the House.

Mr. Speaker, the point in this whole discussion this afternoon is that this government is totally embarrassed by the initiatives that have been moved from this side of the House, because of the government's lack of vision and foresight as to the problems that confront the people of Saskatchewan, in this particular case — agriculture. Mr. Speaker, the reason they have moved the amendment, obviously, is to try to save face. When you think of who moved that amendment, I can understand that. The Minister of Social Services has been trying to save face ever since he was appointed to the ministry.

I want to address myself, on behalf of the opposition, to the motion which concerns the initial price of our grain. We want to know, and the farmers want to know, what that initial price is going to be. They want to make wise managerial decisions in their spring planting program. I don't feel nor, I suppose do the farmers feel, that they can make that wise decision without knowing what that initial price is going to be. The government opposite has taken this whole motion — and the good intent that was behind it, as moved by the opposition — and turned it into a variety of untruths; one of them being that the motion is an attack by the Conservatives on the wheat board. I don't see that anywhere in the motion. We're simply asking that the Canadian Wheat Board release what it expects the initial price to be. There's no attack on the Canadian Wheat Board, Mr. Deputy Speaker. As I said at the outset, the problem with the government opposite is that it is totally embarrassed because it was sleeping at the switch.

Farmers today, and in Saskatchewan particularly, are to a large extent, because of the policies of this government, suffering from inflation. It cannot all be blamed on the federal government and high interest rates. Farmers are under the pressure of high cost of repair for their farm operations. Today they require an increasing amount to spend on necessary capital expenditures for maintenance of efficient operations. They are faced with rising costs of fertilizers. We even have rising costs to the cattle industry, in part because of an uncoordinated managerial practice regarding the selection of appropriate cereal grain for spring planting. That co-ordination and management of planting operations by the farmers of Saskatchewan cannot really be made accurately unless they know what the initial price is going to be. They are suffering under a cost price squeeze which has been perpetrated on the backs of the farmers of this province by this government.

I'll give you an example. You removed the farm cost reduction program which was worth millions of dollars to the people of Saskatchewan. You people removed that. You added to the cost-price squeeze which the farmers of Saskatchewan are under. There's a high taxation rate here in Saskatchewan; I say it is a direct result of poor planning this government is unable to pass on the benefits of the supposed economic boom which we so often hear of. The member for Kelvington-Wadena says that the benefits are not reaching the farmers. Well, he's right, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They are not reaching the farmers. They are not reaching anyone in Saskatchewan.

Even the Premier, speaking in central Canada at the special joint committee on the constitution, said that the great potential benefits of Saskatchewan will take 10 to 15 years to siphon down to the average person. That's you and me — the people on the street and the farmers. Those economic benefits are not reaching the farmers. They are faced with high power rates and who has the control over that? It even costs the farmers more to go to church now. You placed demand meters in churches. You have demand meters in the recreational centres. How many farmers don't curl? How many farmers don't utilize those recreational facilities? They are paying for those facilities. You've added to that cost price squeeze again.

So, in a nutshell all I am saying is that this government, through its policies, has dramatically added to the cost price squeeze which Saskatchewan farmers face today. And they need to know what that initial price of grain is going to be. They need to know.

Members from that side of the House, Mr. Deputy Speaker, don't disagree that farmers need to know what those initial prices are. In fact, members of the government agree that the initial price of grain should be made available to the farmers of this province as soon as possible. If there were a mechanism in this Assembly whereby that motion could be moved by the opposition and have to be voted on, the government opposite would have voted for the motion with our amendment, as it was placed before this Assembly. They would have voted for it. But, their response to the motion as amended by our own members was not in any way sincere. They stood up and they agreed. They put up some of their lightweights first, just to make a few easy comments so they weren't perceived as being against that motion and against having that initial price released. But then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we saw hypocrisy, plain and simple. They are the scoundrels of the West, lower than a western furrow — certainly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that has to be the case. Are they really and sincerely concerned about getting that initial price out so that farmers can make proper and accurate managerial decisions? No, they are not concerned about that. They are more concerned about their own political success. That, in a nutshell, is the reason why they had to move their amendment. It was to divert the debate (at least from their side of the House) to something that, in our opinion, is totally unrelated to the original motion — orderly marketing.

As the member for Thunder Creek said, you moved an amendment to discuss orderly marketing, so why didn't you move to discuss the crowrate, and anything else which you feel strongly about? You didn't do that. You thought that one amendment would be good enough to save a little face, to get this discussion off on another line of attack so the issue wouldn't become whether or not the government was supporting the opposition to have the initial price of grain released from the wheat board at this time. You chose to be political and try to gain some little brownie points by turning the Tory position into a supposed attack on the wheat board. Mr. Speaker, nobody is going to believe that. They are going to believe what I have said this afternoon — that you people are a bunch of hypocrites, in no uncertain terms.

Mr. Speaker, so that we can get this discussion back on the issue as raised by the opposition, back to the issue of the initial price being released, I want to move the following amendment. The amendment, moved by me, and seconded by the member for Bengough-Milestone, reads: The amendment be amended by inserting the words

subject to a vote of the producers of the commodities affected.

after the words 'federal government' where they appear in the third line of the amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order. We are dealing with a motion to which an amendment has been offered, and to which a subamendment has now been offered, to add, after the word, "federal government", in the third last line of the amendment, the following words:

subject to a vote of the producers of the commodities affected.

I find the subamendment in order, and debate continues concurrently on the subamendment, the amendment and the motion.

MR. PICKERING: — Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to rise and take part in this debate this afternoon.

Once again, we see the federal Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Eugene Whelan, and the minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board leaving the province of Saskatchewan in the dark by not announcing the initial prices for our grains prior to the seeding operations which will take place very shortly.

I know that all farmers are concerned. Because of this they cannot budget and, accordingly, have to guess what the price of wheat is going to be. They have no input to suggest what they need for a wheat price. All they get is something that comes out of the minister's office in Ottawa — that it will not be announced.

The farmers are now in the process of cleaning their grain to seed their crop. I imagine some of them have the augers in their bins and do not know whether to keep shovelling into it, or to change to another bin.

The members opposite talk about the rising costs and increased fertilizer prices. One of the best programs they did have — the farm fuel reduction program — they discontinued. Why would they discontinue a program such as this? It was one of the few agriculture programs that the government opposite has initiated since coming into power back in 1971. Now they have taken it away at a time when inflation is on the upswing. The farmers just can't afford these higher prices, with a low price for their produce.

I would suggest that the farmer does not have enough input into what is going on within the Canadian Wheat Board. If we are to market all grains under the Canadian Wheat Board, I think we should have all permit-holders in the province of Saskatchewan, or western Canada determine it by a vote. I think that is the only fair way to get a general consensus of what the actual feelings of the producers are.

The members opposite are great to try to force the people of this province to do

something they are very reluctant to do — and this isn't only in the case of agriculture, but in many other areas. They force things onto the people, and the people certainly don't want them.

The farmers in Saskatchewan, throughout the past 30 years, have been under a quota system, and have been unable to plan their future. As a result, many farmers are deep in debt, which we all know. Because of the quotas and the bank-rate increase, some farmers are almost to the point of going into bankruptcy. We have been screaming at the federal government to initiate programs, induct more money into the farm credit corporation which hasn't kept up with the prices that have been increased over the past years. Also, another thing which was discontinued was the farm improvement loan, which was a reduced loan to the farmers so they could buy machinery. Now it's at a rate such as prime plus one, which is not a very subsidized rate as far as the farmers are concerned.

Again, I would like to back to the Canadian Wheat Board selling all our grain under their jurisdiction. I certainly agree that all farmers should have input and have a vote on this to make sure that it is done in a fair and just manner. So, therefore, Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the subamendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. JOHNSON: — Mr. Speaker, the members opposite, in presenting the third amendment, I believe, to this motion, are indicating to this Assembly that the main objective of the amendments they are putting forward is to destroy the operation of the wheat board. They bring up, as a reason, the experience of the past in the amount of grain that has moved out of the prairie region. Yet, all indications are that, over the next number of years, the problem we will have is not the sale of the grain but, rather, the movement of it out of the prairie region and the capability of producing the 30 million metric tonnes which would be needed.

Mr. Speaker, by asking for a vote on all the commodities affected, they are, in essence, asking in the motion to have us go back to vote to see whether wheat is going to be under the board or whether barley is going to be there, etc. You start right at the very top and go right down through the whole thing. It doesn't make any sense when you bring it back to what the original motion was. It is important for farmers to know what the initial price for grain is under the Canadian Wheat Board, so that they can make some decisions. I think if you look at the motion as it was, it says: "intelligent planning spring planting decisions." If it's important to have the price of grain in order to do that, then it is even more important to have the price for the other grain commodities which are being produced in the province of Saskatchewan. It makes no sense at all and the members opposite realize that.

Mr. Speaker, I urge everyone in this Assembly to vote against the last amendment and to vote for the motion as it stood previously.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SWAN: — Mr. Speaker, it seems like we've been engaged in a bit of charade this afternoon. It started out as a very serious motion and has been deteriorating throughout the discussion from that side throughout the afternoon. When you talk about putting all grains under the wheat board, do you really know what you're saying? How many people out there who are involved in irrigation could have survived over the

past few years if all the grain which they grew was under the Canadian Wheat Board and the quota system? None of them could have survived. They couldn't have survived in any way because of the cost which they experienced. They couldn't have sold enough on an acre of ground to have operated. It's just absolutely impossible at today's prices. Most of them have had to switch to crops like faba beans, peas, mustard, that type of crop in order to survive. So if you were to follow along with your thoughts, we would find that the people who are irrigating could not have operated. I've supported the wheat board throughout the time that I've been farming, and it's getting to be quite a while. The member opposite says token support. If he had supported the wheat board to the extent that I have it would be a very strong organization indeed. But I'd like him to realize that he has no grain to deliver so it is very easy for him to support the wheat board.

The member for Morse was shouting across the floor time after time, "We don't like the Palliser Wheat Growers." That's a great thing for the minister of the Crown to be saying. The Palliser Wheat Growers have had some good points. Nobody is perfect. The National Farmers' Union has had some good points, but they've also had a lot where they've been off in left field so far that nobody could follow them. So I don't think that it is fair for anyone of us to stand up in this House and say, "I don't like such and such a group."

The motion before us started out to be a very simple motion that would provide information to the farmers of our province. But what have you done to that motion? You've actually destroyed the possibility of that motion ever having any affect on the Canadian Wheat Board as far as announcing the payments this spring.

When we talk about going to the public to have a vote on your amendment as to whether or not farmers want the grains under the Canadian Wheat Board, that's a very serious move but it's also a democratic move. If farmers are expected to follow that idea I don't think that there's any way that this legislature or the Government of Canada should make that decision for them. They should have the opportunity to vote and to make that decision.

But I believe it goes even further than that. Can you tell me anyone in this country who would be willing to grow lentils if they had to put them under the Canadian Wheat Board? I grow them, and I grow them for a specific purpose. I grow them as a cash crop that I can sell at times when quotas are tight, because of the high cost of operating today. Lentils are not a crop that's fun to grow, but I grow it for that reason and that reason only. Wheat is still the easiest thing in the world to grow, and perhaps pays as well as most of them. For that reason, I think most of us, if we have to deliver everything we grow to the Canadian Wheat Board, will grow nothing but wheat. And what's going to happen to the Canadian market? The Canadian market is going to go down the drain, because at times you just cannot sell the things that you grow through the wheat board method.

I don't know if any of you were farming back in 1970 and '71. If you were, do you remember the days when the quota was four bushels? If you were able to deliver only four bushels, how would you turn around and seed a crop the next year? It would be absolutely impossible. It's all right for some of us who have been established for a number of years. We might survive one year, or two. But you take the young farmer of today who is deep in debt, paying high interest rates, high land costs, high operating costs. There's no way that he could seed a second crop if that's all he sold. He couldn't even borrow the money.

You talk about a move like this as though it were a very simple thing. It is indeed a very

serious thing, and something that could destroy literally thousands of farmers in this province. Is that the objective of the people across from me? The gentleman says that I don't understand it. I've been around perhaps quite a bit longer than you in this business of give and take in farming . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I am not in the '60s. I am talking about something that can very easily return. All it will take is one big crop in the Soviet Union and in Japan, where they don't need to come to Canada for grain. Believe me, if that happens, the member who is hollering at me may be one of the first persons who can't pay his bills. If you would get out there and start hoeing those crops like you were talking about a while ago, maybe you could keep your capital costs down.

Mr. Speaker, I believe it is an exercise in futility as far as this side of the House is concerned, when you bring forth the kind of amendments that were brought forth. When the government brings in an amendment as they did today, they have diverted the whole intent of the main motion. If that were sent to the Canadian Wheat Board and to the minister responsible for the wheat board, and indeed to the Canadian government, they would laugh at the whole Assembly here, because they know they couldn't get support for that kind of a move . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Listen to the member hollering! How much wheat are you growing, hon. member? Do you have a lot of wheat planted this year? It's really going to concern you . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . He comes from a farm, yes, but there is a lot of difference between coming from a farm and knowing how a farm is operated today. You have been away too long, my friend.

This would not be a move which would be beneficial to Saskatchewan, or to Saskatchewan agriculture. If this were to come to a vote, many farmers would tell you in very short terms that they could not survive with all of these cash crops taken away from them. They could at a time when wheat prices are high and wheat is selling well, but at other times they could not survive . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I am saying, "if the cash crops were under it." I said cash crops, my friend. Don't put words in my mouth. There are a lot of these crops, Mr. Speaker, which we grow only out of necessity, in order to have an income. The members opposite don't seem to realize that.

If the farmers in Saskatchewan do not have the opportunity in the very near future to know what prices they can expect in the new year for the major crops grown in western Canada (and I am speaking of wheat, durum wheat and barley), then they step into this year's crop production in a state of partial blindness. It's not beneficial to the agriculture industry, which is a very necessary industry in this province. So, I am really concerned when they introduce an amendment such as they have introduced today.

I believe what we are going to have to do, Mr. Speaker, is have the members on this side address the issue without the government's assistance. We can contact the Canadian Wheat Board, the minister responsible, and the Canadian government, and make the case very clear. We don't need the support of the government opposite. I guess that's the route we will take. But I believe, Mr. Speaker, that you will have to bear the brunt of the concern we have. It will be on your shoulders that the House could not have a unanimous decision.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the members opposite have done everything they could to destroy agriculture in the last few years. We see reports from the Department of Agriculture that livestock numbers this year have dropped by 25 per cent. They have dropped because of many of the same kinds of policies that you're putting forward in

wheat. When you take a look at the policies you have, which govern the number of cattle that can be put into a community pasture, they cut the number of cattle, because the very established members are cut off completely from pasture.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that as a group we have failed this afternoon to address a very serious problem. We have addressed it; they have abused it. I don't believe that that is the best way for us to deal with a resolution of this type. Mr. Speaker, there are many important things that this Chamber could have been doing this afternoon and the members opposite have held us back.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! The member has drawn to my attention that it is 5 o'clock. Before calling it 5 o'clock, I wonder if the members might be agreeable to hear a Speaker's statement, not in connection with this, but with some other matter.

This particular Speaker's statement is as follows:

Yesterday, the member for Qu'Appelle raised a point of privilege with regard to certain unparliamentary remarks allegedly made by a member last Friday. I have checked the record of last Friday and find that no member who had the floor uttered unparliamentary remarks, as referred to by the hon. member for Qu'Appelle. It is true, though, that on that day and on nearly every sitting day of this session, members from both sides of the Assembly have made loud and often obnoxious remarks from their seats — all of which are unnecessary, uncalled for, and do not contribute to the debate in any way.

The Chair has repeatedly called the House to order and has tried to curb, if not eliminate, disruptive remarks made by members from their seats. Remarks of that nature are unfortunate; therefore, I will repeat my request for all members to cease such poor and unparliamentary behaviour. Remarks made by members not in debate have, in the past, not been judged to be unparliamentary and, in fact, are not heard by the Chair. I call on all hon. members from both sides of the House to resist the temptation to enter the debate from their seats and, instead, to enter the debate by being recognized by the Chair.

MRS. DUNCAN: — The member for Kinistino uttered an obscenity to me last Friday and, I think, whether or not he was recognized by the Chair with his light on or off, an apology should be forthcoming.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order! I took the opportunity to listen to the tape which was made of the event in the House last Friday, when I was not here. I was unable to determine who was calling who what or what comments were being directed to which persons. I would suggest to any person who gave the tape a fair hearing that it was impossible to tell which remarks were being directed at what person by whom. For that reason, I am afraid since I was not here . . . I've given my ruling. I think we find ourselves in an unfortunate situation when these things occur, and there is really nothing I can do about it. I think the member would have been well-advised at that time to rise and deal with the matter then, because unfortunately I wasn't here, and I'm not able to judge from the evidence which was available to me that that is what occurred.

MR. ALLEN: — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Maple Creek has made a serious charge against one of the members of this House. I think that, without substantiation, she should be required to withdraw that statement. You can't make unfounded

allegations in this House, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order. I think this is demonstrating a point which I have been trying to make, that when members rise on a point of order or a point of privilege, it should be taken seriously. I think it is not wise for a member to rise and to make some kind of charge on the basis of privilege — which is a very serious matter — and not have any evidence to support that charge. I've made an examination, as I said in connection with my statement, of the evidence that was before me. I think it's quite clear, and a fair hearing of that tape will not show that any charge was directed toward the member for Maple Creek, or any other member in the Chamber, by any other member. I think that is enough said about that subject.

MR. ALLEN: — Well, Mr. Speaker . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — You're challenging the Chair.

MR. ALLEN: — I am not challenging the Chair . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order. Yes, I wish we would recognize who is the Speaker. I don't appreciate your backing at this time. I will ask the member for Regina Rosemont what point he is rising on.

MR. ALLEN: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the point I rose on was the point that, in the absence of the member for Kinistino, I felt it incumbent as a member of this House to bring to your attention that the member for Maple Creek had levelled a fairly serious charge against the member for Kinistino, i.e., that he used obscenities toward her in this House. I said at that time that without any proof of such an allegation, the member should be required to withdraw the allegation which she made against the hon. member for the Kinistino constituency. I think she should certainly be required to do so.

MR. SPEAKER: — I said before, and I think I'm going to say it for the last time, that this illustrates the point that I've been attempting to make with members in the House. The decorum of this House will rise to the highest level that the members will allow it to rise. That will be good if it's a high level. But, I believe there is no substantiation for the point the member for Maple Creek made. I suggested that I'm sorry that she made the charges, because there is no more evidence to support the charge which she made against a member — and I think if she were here, she should consider withdrawing it — than there was to support the original point of privilege which was raised by the member for Qu'Appelle, with which I have already dealt at length. I said I examined the tape and there is no evidence on the tape to support the point of privilege which was made by the member for Qu'Appelle. Equally, there is no evidence to support the point which was raised by the member for Maple Creek, and it is unfortunate that she raised it.

The Assembly adjourned at 5:08 p.m.