

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
March 15, 1982

The Assembly met at 7 p.m.

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Crow's Nest Rate (continued)

MR. SWAN: — Mr. Speaker, when we interrupted for the supper break I was talking about the Minister of Agriculture and some of the statements that he had been making. I would like to quote from the western transport ministers' conference in Winnipeg on Wednesday, July 4, of 1979, and these are quotes from the Minister of Agriculture for Saskatchewan:

Hall's position was that the railways should provide their own equipment as any other businesses do, but also, as any other business, they should get paid for what they do.

Now that's a direct quote from the Minister of Agriculture. He goes on to say:

Hall is adamant that the crowrate must remain and the difference between the statutory rate and the cost of transporting grain should be paid directly to the railways. In Mr. Hall's words, the crowrate is the only real quid pro quo the West has in confederation.

And he goes on (I'm not reading every paragraph; I'm hitting and missing a bit):

It is true that Hall has received some pretty shoddy treatment, particularly by the federal government, but also by others, which has tended to diffuse attention from the report. The problems have not changed since 1977, they have only intensified. The solutions, if valid then, are valid now. The question is are we prepared to stick by our agreement in Brandon and in Montreal (and there he is quoting the agreement of the western premiers). In Saskatchewan we are prepared to stick to our agreement. We are prepared to co-operate with the federal government in the implementation of Hall's solutions. We are prepared to assist financially. The crowrate guarantee plan is simply an offer that if the federal government will guarantee the crowrate on grain to the producer, will provide the wheat board co-ordination of grain movement and extend the crowrate to process agricultural products, then the province would pay the difference to the railways between the crowrate and the compensatory rate for the movement of processed products from Saskatchewan.

Now, I think those may be fairly worthwhile statements that the minister was making. He didn't stay with them. He made those statements and then he left them. Long ago he moved away from those statements and he has left Saskatchewan in a position today where we have to fight for the crow.

I'd like to go on and say another few things about the Minister of Agriculture. When he was on his tour around the province and speaking, I listened to him in the town of Herbert. One of the things that he was talking about, he said he had to give a little bit of a historical background for. He started out by talking about the Progressive farmer-labour

representative from the town of Govan, who had been elected as a member of parliament. He went on to try and lay the groundwork to make it look as though this Progressive socialist had indeed gone down to Ottawa and was instrumental in bringing about the saving of the crowrate and the introduction of the bill. I want to put into perspective a little bit what the man was saying. The member from Govan was elected about five months after the crow statute had gone through the House of Commons and was approved. If you would like to go back and look in the *Hansard* from 1925 you will find that the bill was introduced on June 16, 1925, and we see royal assent on June 27, 1925. The former Progressive member was elected that fall on October 29, 1925.

I don't know just how this wonderful imaginary person that you dreamed up had any effect on what was happening in the statute. He wasn't there and after he was there there is no record of him ever speaking on the crowrate while he was in the House of Commons. I believe, Mr. Minister, that you deliberately misled the people of Saskatchewan with those statements and I think those statements should be corrected.

I'd like to quote a little bit from the federal *Hansard* at the time that the crowrate bill was being debated. This bill was introduced by a Liberal government and the Minister of Transport at the time was a Mr. Graham. I'll read just a couple of short paragraphs out of what he had said:

In 1919 certain rates were raised very materially and to this increase the maritime provinces seriously objected. The governor in council very wisely, as I think, understanding something of the situation, calls the attention of the board of railway commissioners to the feeling in that part of the country and asks that it be given consideration when the board comes to make its rate structure.

I will deliberate further on this matter, but what the government has in view, and all that it has in view, is to bring about in Canada a better feeling among the different sections of the country in relation to this question of transportation. Now, freight rates in Canada are high, but they are lower in this country than they are to the south of us . . .

There will be in the future a greater degree of contentment on the part of all provinces of Canada who will feel that they have been given a fair show in the fixing of rates for the carrying of their products.

These were statements made by the federal minister of transport. Today it's the same Liberal government in power but the federal Minister of Transport today is speaking very much differently. He's not worried today about the concept of the good feeling between the different provinces; rather he's on the attack, and it appears that the Liberal government in Ottawa today doesn't care what the provinces think, nor whether the provinces object violently to what the government is saying. I believe that we as a legislature need to have the debate we are having today, and that we need to send to Ottawa a clear message of support from both sides of this House so that the crowrate will stay and western agriculture will flourish and be the kind of industry all of us will be proud to be part of.

HON. MR. LONG: — Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to join this very historic debate. It is a pleasure to be involved in this legislature at this time. I believe this government and the New Democratic Party will be making history in Canada when we, along with the

Manitoba government, the National Farmers' Union and other farm organizations will, in the coming months, be fighting to save the crow. I believe firmly, Mr. Speaker, that we will be able to do that.

I am somewhat disappointed in the level of debate by the opposition this afternoon and this evening. It was hardly enthusiastic support of an institution that is so important to western Canada. There have been five speakers on this side of the House, and only two (and I might say two not very forceful speeches) on that side of the House. I think there are some obvious reasons for that, which I hope to develop as I get further into my speech.

I want to take the opportunity to congratulate the member for Last Mountain-Touchwood, the Minister of Agriculture, on the effort he is making, not only across this province but across western Canada, in his fight to save the crow. I believe he has struck a very statesmanlike pose in this whole issue.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. LONG: — There have been those on the political hustings who have accused him of being political about this. That's simply not true, Mr. Speaker. This issue is so important that it goes beyond politics. It goes beyond the lines of political parties, as witnessed by the number of people who are coming out to hear the Minister of Agriculture at these meetings. They cross all political lines, and that's what is concerning the opposition across the way. When you talk about an institution like the crowrate, there is simply no way they, with their political philosophy and their ideology in terms of politics, can believe in that kind of institution. They are Conservatives. Conservatives believe in raw free enterprise. That's what they believe in and that's why they are concerned about the continuation of the crow.

Mr. Speaker, I have been doing a considerable amount of travelling about by constituency, and I've talked to a lot of farmers. I can tell you that one only has to open up the subject of the crow, one only has to mention the crow, and they will tell you what this issue is all about. And they will tell you who is on the side of the farmers and who is on the side of the railways. They know that Gordon MacMurchy and the New Democratic Party and the Government of Saskatchewan are on the side of the farmers.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. LONG: — Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege of representing a constituency along the Alberta border and I have the opportunity to talk to a number of farmers from the province of Alberta.

I have also talked to a number of farmers from the constituency of Meadow Lake. They have come down to see me; apparently the member for Meadow Lake isn't able to deal with them and I have to do it. It's an extra workload for me but I am pleased and proud to do it.

I have talked to Alberta farmers. I am only three miles from the border so they are my neighbours. I grew up with those people. Some of them farm lands on both sides of the border just as our people in Saskatchewan farm land on both sides of the border. In talking to them they tell me that they are concerned about the Alberta Conservative stand on crow. Little wonder, when you read the *Calgary Herald* of February 9, 1982:

The federal government drew a promise from an Alberta cabinet minister Monday, moving to change the 84-year-old Crow's Nest Pass rate for shipping grain by rail. "I am pleased to see they have made a move," agriculture minister Dallas Schmidt told reporters on Monday.

He is the Minister of Agriculture for Alberta. Little wonder my Alberta neighbours are concerned — very little wonder. The *Star-Phoenix* of February 10 has a quotation:

Agriculture minister Dallas Schmidt and Hugh Planche, the Minister of Economic Development, agreed in a statement that the federal government is assuming its responsibility by changing the rates.

Little wonder my Alberta neighbours are concerned. They say to me that they wish their government were taking the position our government here in Saskatchewan is taking. They know the significance of the crow rate enshrined in statute; they know what it means to them. They know what the increase of 10 times crow will mean to them in economic terms. They know what the loss of equal rates for equal distance will mean. They know what variable rates will mean to the towns of Kitscoty, Paradise Valley and Blackfoot and to other communities west of the Saskatchewan border. They are very clear, and they know that it will destroy not only their communities, but other communities in the area.

I attended a function in my constituency at Neilburg on Saturday. It was sponsored by the Department of Culture and Youth of Saskatchewan and was the showing of a regional display of art works for that area. There were approximately 200 local artists and local people interested in that kind of display. I couldn't help but think as I drove away that afternoon, would this have happened if it hadn't been for an institution like the crow? Would those local artists have been there? They are farmers and farmers' wives — people who can take a paintbrush or a camera and create a work of art. They are local folks. Would those local folks even be there without the crowrate? Will they be there in the future if the Pepin plan, the CPR plan, and, indeed, the Tory plan is implemented to do away with the crowrate? Will they still be there?

Point of Privilege

Alleged Leak of Budgetary Information

MR. ANDREW: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to you, Mr. Speaker, a question of privilege. It is this: On the 6 o'clock newscast at the supper hour tonight on CBC television, one Ron Shorvoyce, reporter for CBC television, raised allegations on that telecast, saying that in fact he had in his possession and showed on television, many of the budgetary documents, budget issues and budget numbers that are to be presented on Thursday, the date announced for the budget. Now I think, Mr. Speaker, that this is a serious question of privilege and breach of privilege of parliament and the legislature, which perhaps could also borderline on a contempt for the parliamentary institution. And I raise that point to you, Mr. Speaker, knowing full well, and making the argument, that in fact the parliamentary system of government recognizes the importance of government's budget being presented by the Minister of Finance to the Legislative Assembly or to the parliament. And that is a very strong, long-lasting tradition and custom that is fundamental to our parliamentary system. It is also important, Mr. Speaker, that budget documents should not be leaked to the press; there is a very great significance in the fact that the budget is confidential until the time the Minister of

Finance rises in his place and delivers his budget address. And I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that this is, in fact, a very serious breach by someone. I suppose ultimately it is the minister's responsibility in our parliamentary system of government. And I would simply raise to you, Mr. Speaker, a point of privilege of parliament and I think a contempt for the parliamentary system.

HON. MR. ROMANOW: — I'm uncertain as to how this matter arose. I'm sorry, I was out of the legislature for the time being, but I would draw to your attention rule 6 with respect to privilege. It does say the Speaker shall have the right to waive notice and the like, but my only comment would be this: I have not seen any newspaper reports that were carried at 6 o'clock, or whenever they are purported to have been carried. My position, Mr. Speaker, is that we ought not to be, or you ought not to be, making any kind of a decision or ruling based on newspaper items or newspaper report or TV. I think this is a matter which really is no more than simply what a reporter might say is or is not the budget. That's my only observation, apart from the fact that the issue could easily have been raised by the opposition tomorrow without disrupting the importance of the crow debate.

MR. BERNTSON: — Mr. Speaker, could I comment on this question of privilege raised for your consideration? In Beauchesne's *Parliamentary Rules and Forms*, Fourth Edition, 1958, page 95, it states that:

A matter of privilege which claims precedence over other public business should be a subject which has recently arisen and which calls for the immediate interposition of the House. The matter should be raised at the earliest opportunity.

I take it, Mr. Speaker, that that is now, since it was the 6 o'clock news that this was broadcast on.

A matter which is postponed to suit the convenience of the House or to secure the attendance of a member implicated, or to give the Speaker an opportunity to consider it fully, does not forfeit priority when it is eventually raised.

And so to speak to the point that the Hon. Attorney General raises, Mr. Speaker, we have no quarrel with getting back to the crow debate, providing Mr. Speaker understands that the budget in fact is coming down on Tuesday. And, if in fact this material was leaked to the media, surely Mr. Speaker's office has some obligation to bring a ruling in prior to the budget, or what is this place for? The budget might as well be given to the media and let them run with it, rather than debate it in this House.

So the point quite simply, Mr. Speaker, is that the ruling should come in prior to the budget speech being brought to this House. And, Mr. Speaker, the point raised by the Attorney General is understood, but we wanted to raise it by the rules — and I'm sure the Speaker understands it — at the earliest possible opportunity.

MR. SPEAKER: — According to the rules of our Assembly, I will take the matter into consideration as soon as possible and determine in my mind if in fact there's a *prima facie* case for a breach of privilege and report back to the House at the earliest opportunity, which I expect may be sometime tomorrow.

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Crow's Nest Rate (continued)

HON. MR. LONG: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's right, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture has had a good show out there. He's had a good show because the farmers of Saskatchewan are coming out to meet with him. They understand this issue and they know what it's all about. Unfortunately, the Conservative opposition doesn't understand or know what this is all about, and that's their problem, not ours. It's not our problem if 95 per cent of the farmers of Saskatchewan are supporting our stand on the crowrate and are concerned about the Tory stand on the crowrate. That's not our problem; that's the Tories' problem.

I've had an opportunity, Mr. Speaker, as I was saying earlier, in travelling about the constituency to talk to a number of young farmers. I know Mr. MacMurchy, the Minister of Agriculture, has had a number of young farmers out to the meetings that he has attended throughout the province. In fact, I have never seen, in my experience, so many young farmers turn out to agricultural meetings before. Obviously they know and understand the important issue of the crowrate.

In talking to me one young farmer said, "You know, I rent land from Marathon Realty. This year I experienced a 78 per cent increase in my lease fees." A 78 per cent increase! He said, "If they can do that to me, what will they do to me if we lose the crowrate enshrined in statute?" And I said, "Well, young man, at 10 times crow they will increase your freight rate by 1,000 per cent, not 78 per cent but by 10,000 per cent plus." And he went away shaking his head, because he knew he had to deal with some very harsh economic times in Saskatchewan and right across Canada. He knew that the times were a little tough for farmers out there in terms of inflation and high costs and expenses, and he did not need this extra added to his concerns.

So, Mr. Speaker, in travelling about the constituency I sense a mood of concern, a need to fight this federal thrust against western Canada and against the rural community — not only the rural community, but the businessmen. In talking to businessmen across the constituency, they too are very aware what the loss of the crowrate will mean to them. They know that when money no longer flows into the farmers' pockets, it's money that does not go back to the local economy.

Mr. Speaker, another concern of mine is the federal Conservative position on this particular issue. It's been clear over the years, watching federal MPs across the western part of Canada, what their position is. I read from the *Calgary Herald* of February 13, 1982:

The conventional wisdom is that Vegreville MP Don Mazankowski, the Clark transport minister at one time, would have proceeded along the lines very similar to the course that Pepin has struck.

There's little question, Mr. Speaker, where the MP from Vegreville stands or where he would have stood.

Let's go on to the former grain czar of western Canada, Hugh Horner, who held Alberta cabinet portfolios in agriculture, transportation and economic development before serving as grain transport co-ordinator under the Clark and Trudeau governments. He condemned grain producers who insist on sticking with the Crow's Nest rates for shipping grain by rail to export points. That's not a solution, he said. And I ask the

opposition to comment on that particular statement by one of their prime Tories, a former minister of agriculture, a former minister of the government that they so often laud as the number one jewel in the Tory Crown across Canada. I ask them to comment on that.

Mr. Speaker, on November 15, 1979, the federal NDP MPs demanded in parliament that either Prime Minister Joe Clark or his transport minister, Don Mazankowski, commit the PC government to keeping the crowrate in effect for farmers. Both Clark and Mazankowski refused, Mr. Speaker. That's where the federal PC Party stands. They refused to support western Canadian farmers and that's why, Mr. Speaker, at this time, farmers in Saskatchewan, farmers in Manitoba, and farmers in Alberta are rallying behind the battle cry of the National Farmers' Union, and the Saskatchewan and Manitoba governments to fight to save the crow.

One of the questions, Mr. Speaker, that farmers pose to me when I talk to them is: do you think we can save the crow; do you think it can be done? I say that we fought the rail line abandonment fight and we were successful. We fought the federal government on the constitution issue and we were successful. I believe that if we stick together we can fight them on the crowrate and we can save the crow.

Mr. Speaker, I said that I had travelled, not only around my constituency, but into other neighbouring ridings and I've had the opportunity to talk to many people — farmers, school teachers, professionals and businessmen. They are all united in one aspect at this time and that is in supporting the government in its fight to preserve the crow.

Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that it's too bad that the members opposite aren't sincere about what they say. We see them here today in a debate. There is very little effort put into their speeches. I see very few speakers ready to go over there, Mr. Speaker, very few. I think that message is going to get out to rural Saskatchewan and when we do go to the hustings once again to re-elect an NDP government in this province, the people of Saskatchewan will remember and they will know and they will react accordingly. Mr. Speaker, I doubt if there will be very many of those members opposite returned to this House. I think that's the toll they will pay for not coming out flat-footed, for not coming out strongly, in support of a statutory rate in crow, equal rates for equal distances.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure there is no question in the minds of this legislature where I stand as far as the crowrate is concerned.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to be able to take part in this debate and I rise in support of this motion. Seldom in our history have we faced so great a trip as has been presented by Pepin in abolishing the crow. Today I want to speak about how the Pepin plan will affect Saskatchewan producers.

That plan is the most serious attack ever mounted against the crowrate. The Pepin plan itself is not difficult to understand. It guarantees in law that the railroad will receive more for moving the grain and the farmer will receive less. It also guarantees that the farmer will have to pay a lot more for the transport of grain each year and he'll have to keep on paying more, year after year after year. The Pepin plan also guarantees that there will be no fixed rates for grain farmers. The end result of the federal proposals would be to add grain transportation to the list of ever-increasing farm operating costs.

The Pepin plan is simply dishonest. While saying he just wants to update the crowrate, Pepin's plan makes it crystal clear that what the federal government really wants to do is to kill the crowrate. The complete reversal in the crow principles I have just outlined shows this to be the case.

It will be a black day in Canadian history if the federal government is allowed to tear up part of the confederation bargain in the interests of political expediency and railroad greed. If they succeed, they will succeed at the expense of an historic law that has been fundamental to the development of our prairie society. The Pepin plan is nothing less than an attempt to restructure the social and economic fabric of Saskatchewan. It does this by paving the way for the railroad to plunder farm income. Since 1925 farmers and their income have been protected from railroad greed by having a rate for grain hauling fixed in law. By removing that protection, the Pepin plan will guarantee that income from grain producers flows not to the farmers and through them to other communities, but instead to the railroads and their corporate enterprises outside the province. The plundering of farm income will mean an end to many farmers, the end to many towns and, in the final analysis, the end to a unique way of life on the Prairies.

When one looks at the Pepin plan, it is clear that by 1990 farmers will pay at least 10 times the crowrate for moving grain and in all likelihood even more than that. The federal government says that by 1990 it will cost the railroads \$2.2 billion to move grain. That figure is based on Canadian Wheat Board growth targets for grain exports. Farmers will have to pick up the difference between that cost and the current crowrate. Ottawa has suggested by no means guaranteed that it will pay \$612 million of the difference. Thus, what Ottawa is saying is that farmers will have to pay between \$1.4 billion and \$2 billion more each year and continue to pay that amount every year for moving grain to export markets. This means that the average freight rate in Saskatchewan will be between \$1.25 per bushel and maybe \$1.70 per bushel by 1990. So we know that by 1990 under the Pepin plan, farmers will pay at least \$1.4 billion a year more and quite likely \$2 billion a year more for grain hauling.

What does that mean for Saskatchewan? Based on the November, 1981, 10-year economic forecast for Saskatchewan, it means an investment loss of between \$728 million and \$1 billion each year. It means a retail sales loss of between \$532 million and \$760 million a year. It means the failure to realize 12,000 jobs to 16,000 jobs every year. That's the Pepin plan for Saskatchewan.

That is why I say it is nothing less than an attempt to restructure our province. For the average grain farmer in Saskatchewan, the extra transportation costs for moving grain will be nearly \$15,000 to \$16,000 a year by 1990 alone, if one assume the federal subsidy remains in place. If not, over \$21,000 a year could be lost by that farmer, if that subsidy is not there.

In Montana and North Dakota, Producers are now paying 10 times the crowrate and they're getting lousy service from the railways. Thus, if Pepin intends to move the compensatory rate here, our producers will also be paying 10 times the crowrate, and in very short order I might say.

What effect would that have on the grain farmers? A rate of five times the crow in 1980 would have reduced net farm income in Saskatchewan by about \$260 million or 37 per cent. A rate of 10 times the crow would have reduced net farm income by about \$585 million or 83 per cent. What this means is that with so-called compensatory rates of 10 times the crow in 1980, every dollar in net farm income for that year would have been

reduced to about 17 cents.

Last year in net farm income Saskatchewan averaged about \$17,600. The Pepin plan, had it been in effect, would have reduced that net income to just under \$3,000. Thus the return to farmers on their investment falls well below 10 per cent. To simply hold their own, farmers would have to vastly increase production, at the same time having less money to work with. Ten times the crow means that at any average freight rate of about \$1.25 a bushel, even at \$5 a bushel for wheat, the farmer stand to lose at least 25 per cent off the top for transportation. You don't have to be an agriculture professor to realize that those kinds of cost factors decrease farm income and farm stability. You don't have to be a professor to realize that those kinds of cost increases will retard the growth of western Canada.

Mr. Speaker, there is really only one possible outcome if the Pepin plan is put into place: few farmers, and fewer farmers means fewer towns. By attacking one of the mainstays of our economy in Saskatchewan, agriculture, the Pepin plan would set in motion a whole train of events. As net farm income dries up, investment in agriculture will slow up, and many farm operations will become economically unviable.

As farmers are forced off the land the business community will feel the effects of a slump in retail sales. I mentioned earlier the potential loss of up to \$760 million a year in retail sales. In 1980, Saskatchewan retail sales totalled \$3.4 billion. There will be precious little room for retail growth if the Pepin plan pulls \$1.4 billion to \$2 billion out of the economy. Thus an impact on farmers of slashed income will also be an indicator of what business can expect in this province.

It is difficult at this stage to determine how many farmers the Pepin plan would put out of business. This is because we don't know how fast Pepin intends to move the rates up or to what degree expanded production could cushion those rates or where the price of wheat may go over the next few years. I know the Leader of the Conservative Party said five years ago he considered 80 per cent of the farm population to be non-productive. If the price of wheat remains low and the crowrate is multiplied by a factor of 9 or 10, I think that Dr. Devine may yet see his vision of corporate agriculture come to pass in Saskatchewan.

We know full well how Devine has blamed the crowrate for what he says has been retarded growth in western Canada and economic distortions. Apparently Devine, the professor, felt removing the crow would smooth out those distortions and foster growth. Well, Mr. Speaker, it appears that Devine was not the only member of the Conservative Party who felt the crow should go. As was mentioned before, federal MP Don Mazankowski said that the short-lived Conservative government — in which he was transport minister — was working on a plan to change the crow. As for the provincial Conservatives, most of them felt it was better to be out of the Chambers rather than in the chambers during this debate this evening. The member for Thunder Creek, referring to the crow, declared that our system is broken down completely, that this is 1980 and the changes have to be made; the Conservative opposition leader, Mr. Berntson, in *Hansard*, November 28, 1980, demanded the government drop its unqualified support of the crow principles and instead endorse the position taken by the western agricultural conference; the member for Rosetown-Elrose in *Hansard*, December 3, 1980, said: "The Minister of Agriculture is still saying no, no change in the crowrate. I wonder if it is a realistic stand?" This was the policy the Conservative government in Ottawa put forward during its short term in office. There was a need for a change, he felt.

It is true, as Mr. Devine says, that without the crow those profits would have to be higher. But I think the Conservative leader should be worrying about what will happen here, not whether CP's profits should be made bigger. I think the Conservative leader would do well to stand with the farmers and businessmen. The railroads can well look after themselves.

Mr. Speaker, the Pepin plan is simply a disaster for farmers. The plan replaces all guarantees protecting farmers with guarantees for the railroads. We can count on Pepin trying to make the first increase smaller. I think what is eventually planned will be to slowly increase it year after year until we are very likely to be looking at a very high freight rate. And that is, I think one could say, a very neat Liberal trick — one that has been used by the Liberals and I am sure would very well be used by the Conservatives if they were in power today.

If the first increase is only two or three times the crow, I think Pepin would hope that the farmers would say to themselves that it could have been worse. But what happens after the Liberals get their foot in the door? No fixed rates for hauling grain means the farmers can only guess at what their grain transportation in the years ahead will cost. Under the Pepin plan the question is not if the rate will go to 10 times the crow, but when it will get there. This is the nature of the compensatory rate.

Variable rates add another twist to the plot. Variable rates mean higher branch line rates. Farmers on branch lines will be paying 10 times the crow before the mainlines will. But eventually all farmers will be paying 10 times the crow. And, of course, by then the branch lines will probably be paying 15 times the crow. So farmers trying to plan for the next year will just have to guess. Of course, each year there will be fewer farmers guessing, compounding the tragedy. It is a fact that there is no reason to suppose that farmers will get any better service from the railways.

I mentioned at the outset that U.S. producers are now paying 10 times the crow. What the Pepin plan proposes to do is add to the transportation costs of farmers here, and the results will be the same. Farmers will pay more and they will get less. The end result can only be fewer farmers, fewer towns and fewer jobs.

The Pepin plan is an outright attempt to restructure rural Saskatchewan to suit needs, or perhaps I should say, to suit the greeds of the railroad companies. Mr. Speaker, everyone on this side of the House will be supporting the motion. I suspect everyone opposite will also be supporting the motion despite the fact that for the last six years clearly they have been attacking the crowrate.

Mr. Speaker, what I see about the crowrate and the changes that are being proposed takes me back to the '40s when the farm economy was, or was getting, as bad as what it's getting to be now. I get a very tight feeling in my midsection when I think that members of this legislature would be supporting that kind of move. I don't think the farmers want it and I think the farmers in this province have indicated that they want no part of what has happened in years past, or removing what they have fought hard for.

I think that it is fair to say that the opposition has found that the public does not share its views about the crow. I think we will see that members opposite will be trying to peddle the same phony deathbed repentance their leader is trying to peddle. I can hardly wait to see their certificate of guarantee on the crow. We see very few of them getting up fighting in support of the crow in this debate and I think that should indicate to the

people of Saskatchewan where the Conservative Party stands.

Mr. Speaker, I support the motion because the Pepin plan is a disaster for farmers; it is a disaster for businessmen, for our cities, our towns, and our villages, and we must fight this plan with all the vigour we can muster and if we fight we can win.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Speaker, I've listened to some of the interesting comments made by the members opposite. Now they talk about jiggery-pokery and who is really thinking this way or thinking that way. That reminds me of the 1978 election. During that election the Premier and the government said one thing, and all through the campaign they said one thing. On election night when they asked the Premier if he believed the big lie, he said, "It worked, didn't it? We won the election."

Is that what we are seeing now? The road show with Mr. MacMurchy, the big statesman in the House. Do we have a show going or do we want to save the crow? The fact is we're here and we're standing in a joint motion to save the crow. You guys moved it and we're going with you. So let's not deflect boys; get on the issues.

The enemy is Trudeau and Pepin, not this side of the House. The enemy is down in Ottawa — the Liberals Pepin and Trudeau. If you want to save the crow, let's save the crow and not get into hocus-pocus. Or are we seeing the big lie like we saw in 1978? Which way is it guys?

Now let's make it straightforward; Pepin has not followed everything he has promised the West. In my own constituency the Carlton line was approved and was supposed to be put in the perimeter system. It still isn't today. That guy should be replaced, but why is he in the government today? Because five of your Saskatchewan NDP boys supported the Liberals and Trudeau and we have that lousy government instead of a pro-western Canada government.

Now let's get it down to where you can understand it, the member for Turtleford, the member for Redberry and the member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake. The fact is crow has got to stay the way it is and the farmers can't afford to pay any more. You know, I'd rather be able to sleep at night because I know I have always spoken the truth than play wishy-washy like you guys do . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Well, I will put it as simply as I can for the yakkers and the dackers and the sitters — crow stays, the statutory rate stays; Pepin, get your fingers out of the farmers' pockets because crow stays the way it is . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

You know there is one nice thing about getting on your feet and talking. You're always going to get a wisecracker, and there is one thing about that wisecracker; he is sure putting it to everybody with his power rates and everything else. But we're here to talk about the crow, so let's stay on the crow, and not the big lie . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The fact is that he is going to be the next premier, and you might not even be here. Let's get that straight.

Now, the crow stays. We all agree to it; the members opposite can all get on their feet and make their speeches. We'll make our speeches. We're going to pass a unanimous resolution; we're going to send it to Mr. Pepin and Mr. Trudeau and tell them to leave

the crow alone. Let's get it over with, because the crow is important to everybody in this province.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to support the motion, as all of our members are.

MR. MATSALLA: — Mr. Speaker, I would to join my colleagues on this side of the House to participate and voice support, in no uncertain terms, for the retention of the statutory crowrate for the farmers. Now this issue is of vital importance to my constituents in Canora, as it is to many of the other rural communities, and for that matter, for the province of Saskatchewan.

The crowrate is a cornerstone on which western agriculture is built. Without it farmers face transportation costs that will quickly make grain farming obsolete. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Pepin has announced a plan to abandon the crowrate, or as he puts it, a comprehensive approach to meet western Canada's future railway needs. Mr. Pepin's plan will guarantee in law that the railways will receive increasing compensation for moving grain, and that farmers will pay part or all of that cost.

At the present time farmers are protected by law against rate increases, but Pepin's plan proposes that there is not be a fixed rate for producers. In the plan there is not to be a guarantee of equal rates for equal distance. Unless this principle is guaranteed in law, the railways will be free to set freight rates that will make it more expensive to ship grain from elevators on branch lines, or from towns which they wish to abandon.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Pepin realizes as well as we do the full implications of these changes to the crowrate. He is as determined to kill the crow as we in the New Democratic Party government are to save it. It is no accident that the changes he proposed would make the crowrate a benefit in name only.

I would like to give a few examples of what the crowrate means to my constituency. The current crowrate from Canora to Vancouver is 27 cents per hundredweight. At the same time U.S. farmers in Minot, North Dakota (about the same distance from the West Coast) pay \$2.33 cents per hundredweight to ship their grain to Portland or Seattle. Now, Mr. Speaker, that means that the U.S. farmers pay nine times as much as we in Saskatchewan pay now to export our grain. If we take even five times the crowrate as a new shipping rate and apply it to Canora, as our example, we find farmers will lose about \$638,000 in lost income. If we take 10 times the crow, which is a much more likely figure (considering the U.S. situation), then farmers who deliver grain to Canora will lose an estimated \$1.4 million.

A loss of this magnitude to farmers means a loss of investment for the town of Canora of approximately \$750,000. It means lost retail sales of about \$550,000; it means about 12 fewer jobs in the community. Mr. Speaker, farmers in my constituency would suffer, but as you can see small businesses would also suffer. Jobs will be lost, people will move away, and Canora will face difficult times.

However, Canora might be able to survive, but the impact on smaller towns particularly those under 200 people, would be devastating. The loss in farm income in places with one general store, whose owners now make a modest income, would spell the end of that store. Soon there would be many of these small communities with "no services" written under highway signs. As in North Dakota and Montana, towns would become villages, villages would become hamlets, and hamlets would eventually disappear. Farmers would grow larger and the family farm would become a thing of the past. Those

are some of the direct effects the loss of the crowrate would have on my constituency.

There is another effect, which one might overlook at first, but which is as deadly to strong rural communities as the reduction in farm income. That is the massive increases in spending that will face rural municipalities. Mr. Speaker, let me explain how that will come about.

First, branch lines will be abandoned. With the Pepin plan in place the railroads can force abandonment by simply raising the rates on the branch line to a point where the farmer using the branch line would be marketing his grain at a loss. That is what is really meant by the phrase variable rates, and that is why the NDP insists on the principle of equal rates for equal distances.

But, Mr. Speaker, the Pepin plan makes it easy for the railroad. Suppose the main line rate around Canora is \$2.70 per hundredweight, or 10 times the crow. Now, to abandon a branch line the railroad simply raises the rate on that line to \$3 per hundredweight. That forces farmers to deliver to the closest main line delivery point. The railroad avoids having to apply to abandon the branch line because farmers can simply no longer afford to use it. Farmers are then forced to pay the cost of trucking their grain to the main lines. For Canora area farmers that would mean hauling grain an extra 20 to 30 miles on a round trip, or perhaps even further.

But let's look at the cost to the rural municipalities. To be on the cautious side, let's say that the Pepin plan will result in 80 inland terminals when the railways are through abandoning branch lines. In that case, extra road construction costs between 1975 and 1990 would increase by over \$3.3 billion. Well, Mr. Speaker, this is a staggering amount. This amount must be spent on both highways and municipal roads if large trucks are used, as they must be, to haul grain long distances. Since highways have a 20-year life span, the annual construction costs resulting from Pepin's plan to abandon the crow work out to about \$165 million a year. These estimates, imposing as they are, Mr. Speaker, do not include annual maintenance costs.

According to the Department of Rural Affairs, in general maintenance costs will run at about one-third construction costs, or about \$55 million for the province. These are average costs. If a major change in the delivery system occurs, as it most certainly would in many areas, costs would skyrocket. Large numbers of semi-trailer trucks hauling night and day under all weather conditions would greatly increase the wear and tear on the roads.

Mr. Speaker, new problems would arise in respect to safety and the nuisance caused by these trucks, particularly on gravel roads where dust and wet weather would be a major problem. In addition, almost 1,000 miles of presently oiled surface primary grid roads would require upgrading at a cost of about \$83,000 per mile. Thus the total annual cost to move Saskatchewan grain would be about \$220 million a year. That works out to roughly \$3,670 per farm. For permit holders who deliver to Canora that means an additional cost of roughly \$1.4 million. Of course, that depends on how far farmers have to truck their grain but we can expect that these are going to be long distances.

Mr. Speaker, whether you apply that to the individual farmer's income or raise taxes for every Saskatchewan resident, we are looking at another crippling blow that would follow the loss of the crowrate.

Mr. Speaker, there are those who say that we should pay more, if that's what the free

market requires. Now Grant Devine, the leader of the Conservatives is one of these, along with many other Conservatives. Mr. Devine said on the CBC news on June 5, 1980, and I quote, "Farmers would be willing to see the crowrate increased." Then two days later, Devine accused our Minister of Agriculture of being in favour of keeping the crow the way it is, as if it were something to be ashamed of. Now Mr. Devine is quote in the June 7, 1980, issue of the *Leader-Post* as saying, "Farmers would pay the variable cost protected by statute, which would change from time to time."

Now Mr. Devine is pretending he never said those things and pretending, I think, is a kind way of saying it. Perhaps Mr. Devine has forgotten some of his pronouncements on the crowrate. Mr. Speaker, perhaps he has forgotten what he wrote when he was an unsuccessful candidate for the Progressive Conservative Party in 1978. Let me remind the members opposite what their leader wrote in the *Canadian Journal of Agriculture Economics*, July 1978, on pages 80 and 81. I'll give this in point form:

1. The Crow's Nest rate may have decreased farm income stability on the Prairies.
2. The Crow's Nest rate may have increased retail prices to the prairie consumer.
3. Due to lower rates on grain, the freight rate structure on non-statutory rates may have been higher.
4. The Crow's Nest rate may have distorted the allocation of resources in the transportation industry. And here Mr. Devine adds that the Crow's Nest rates have produced "somewhat unfair competition to other modes, particularly trucks."
5. The Crow's Nest rate may have reduced the level of economic and employment opportunities and general wealth by limiting the growth of the industrial sector.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, these are the thoughts and the conclusions of the Conservative leader, and in deep sincerity, I believe, supported by the members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Saskatchewan has calculated both the direct and indirect cost that would result from the loss of the crowrate. Mr. Devine is intent on proving the crowrate has cost the people of this province loss of income and loss of opportunity. Now he says he supports the crowrate and always has supported the crowrate, and he expects the people of Saskatchewan to believe him. I can only sadly draw the conclusion that the present Leader of the Conservative Party shares the lack of credibility of his immediate predecessor, the member for Nipawin.

Mr. Speaker, if the members of the Conservative Party were serious in their desire to save the crowrate for Saskatchewan farmers, they would support the Government of Saskatchewan in this resolution, not only by voting but speaking sincerely for it, as I am doing and as I know my constituents do. Mr. Speaker, I will be voting in support of the resolution.

MR. JOHNSON: — Mr. Speaker, to participate in this debate, I believe, is an honour. I find it surprising that the members opposite seem to be so ill-prepared to speak positively about a policy which runs so deep in rural Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, if you would take a minute to think about the attempted speech that the member for Rosthern gave on this subject you will understand why I can say that the

members to your right have a policy for the crowrate and for rail transportation as it affects farmers that is variable. They really support variable rates and the abandonment of the crow. They stand up in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, as they do in ads which they are putting in the newspapers, saying, "We support the crow; we always have supported the crow." One could say that the shoe is hurting, so they are howling into the wind.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to approach this subject. I realize that those members opposite who support a variable policy for rail transportation are for variable rates one day, and the next day they support the crow benefit for farmers. This is just making smaller steps toward compensatory rates for the farmers or just making more steps in order to get there over a longer period of time. The member for Rosetown-Elrose stood in this House in 1980 and made the statement that he supported the Conservative policy which was the crow benefit plan. Really what he said at that time was that he supported a policy that would eventually achieve the demise of the crowrate. He should understand what he was doing.

Mr. Speaker, the next day, which is now today, you see them coming under political pressure and saying, "I'm for the crow; I support the crow." There is very little substance behind those remarks. In fact, in most cases, they do not even understand the economics of a rail system for the prairie region.

Mr. Speaker, member by member, those to your right have spoken at different times against the crow. They have done it either indirectly . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — To the left.

MR. JOHNSON: — To the left. Okay, I will correct myself, Mr. Speaker. Those to your left . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . They are right wing, but they are to your left. They have spoken indirectly and directly against the present crowrate for farmers. The member for Thunder Creek has supported the concept of inland terminals, the abandonment of branch lines, the long-distance trucking, the variable rates, and the whole structure which makes it viable for someone who has the funds to play the markets for greater benefits and for those who oppose the smaller farmer who must rely upon an orderly marketing system.

The member for Rosetown-Elrose who sits in the back row has made statements in this House to indicate that he is in support of removal of the crow. I will read from *Hansard*, December 3, 1980:

Over the past number of years there has been an ongoing debate with regard to the crowrate. We now hear the federal government saying that it is their opinion it is time for a change. They are looking at January 1 as a possible time for that change. The Minister of Agriculture is still saying, "No change in the crowrate." Perhaps that is a good stand, but I wonder if it is a realistic stand.

And then the member for Rosetown-Elrose lost his trend of thought and went into talking about the pool, about the federal Conservative Party's short term in office and about the federal party's opinion on other things and then he came back to his trend of thought and he said, "The government, "meaning the government of Saskatchewan, "should get its head out of the sand and begin to look at something more realistic."

Mr. Speaker, the member stood in this Assembly this afternoon saying that he supported the crowrate, but I listened and I did not hear him say why he supported the crow. He just kept saying he supported the crow, but he didn't indicate who the people were that were pushing the changes in the crow and what they were attempting to achieve. That is because sometime in the future, Mr. Speaker, I think the member for Rosetown-Elrose wants to be able to slide back into his old position.

Mr. Speaker, I do not have the material to go into it, but I am quite sure that you could probably find the same type of things that the member for Wilkie has said. I'm sure that they're there.

Mr. Speaker, I doubt if those members to your left understand the real needs for a rail system to serve Canada. They feel the political impact when they go out on the hustings, and the farmers, who understand it, are telling them that it must stay; they feel that, but they don't really understand what the needs are for a system that provides service, not because it is profitable for the railroads, but because it is a valuable, needed service for a society. It uses less petroleum, less energy for moving goods, and it uses less land for the quantity of goods that it moves in a road system. There are fewer accidents, more than likely, on the rail system, although that maybe somewhat questionable at the present time. And in the case of the prairie economy it provides one of the ways of maintaining a family farm and assists in that way in providing foreign exchange for Canada. If you look at the grain production, most of it is used in world trade and we gather, from that exchange, monies that we can then spend for importing other goods. These are vital things to the Canadian society.

Mr. Speaker, to put it in short terms, what we need and must have is a railway system that is organized for service, rather than a railway system that is organized to generate a profit for shareholders, which the members opposite would like to see occur. They are not prepared to state that at this time, but sometime in the future, no doubt, they will be making that very statement.

Mr. Speaker, rail transportation should be a basic element in the fabric of the Canadian society, just as basic as roads, ports, power and telephones, with the only discussion being where the improvement should come in the system. If you take a look and check it through, you will find that all systems in all of the areas of transportation — marine, road, air — receive subsidies that are greater than the subsidy that rail receives. Mr. Speaker, I believe that we should see the same subsidies or greater subsidies for rail, because its impact on the environment is the least damaging.

Mr. Speaker, we in Canada still have political parties that wish to see rail transportation as a non-regulated operation, operating in its own best interest. Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that that interest is not the interest of the farmers in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Conservative Party here in the province has stated on a number of occasions that he would like to see the crow go. He told a reporter, Vern Good, in June of 1980, at the meeting of ministers responsible for grain transportation in Victoria, that the province of Saskatchewan is alone in its position on the crowrate. Mr. Devine said that confrontation must be replaced by co-operation among the western provinces if a satisfactory or new arrangement is to be put into place. Mr. Speaker, at that time the only province, which is correct here, supporting the crowrate was the province of Saskatchewan. The other three provinces were opposed to the crowrate, and what the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party in the province of

Saskatchewan was really saying was that he wanted to see the crow go.

Mr. Speaker, in June 1980, the leader said that he wanted to see this new deal for railways, a new deal for the already wealthy. And anyone who wants to go through the records on what the Canadian Pacific investments really are will see how wealthy they really are.

Mr. Speaker, in a book called *Canadian Transportation Economics*, written by A. W. Currie, a section discusses the reasons why the Canadian Pacific accepted the deal in 1897. Mr. Currie stated that Sir William Van Horne, then the general manager of Canadian Pacific, had been credited with enormous vision because he saw that low rates would induce new settlement, increase the volume and profitability of the railway's traffic and enormously enhance the value of the company's extensive land holdings. I believe that the Canadian Pacific has not changed its operating policy in the intervening 85 years — that being a policy of operate today on the public purse and generate large profits for yourself tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, the only thing that has changed over the years is that CP holdings have increased in value; traffic volumes have risen and are still on the rise; and the West is now settled. There are no more people to come into the agricultural area, so in the terms of CP it is time to take a profit. The only thing standing in the way is the statutory crowrate, and it must go. The railway works with the assistance of its two handmaidens — namely the Liberal and Conservative parties, which have been paid in advance via political donations of more than \$380,000 in the past three years. And I want you to note, Mr. Speaker, that it is almost equal payments, so they don't really concern themselves with the variations that one party has comparative to the other party. They've spent this money, Mr. Speaker, so that they can maximize the return on their investment.

Mr. Speaker, the question is: at whose expense? Simply put, the Pepin plan proposed that western farmers pick up the bill. Yes, there is some federal money — \$612 million per year. And this is the amount because their resources are limited, they say. But, Mr. Speaker, the strange part about the proposal is that it is the farmer who ends up picking up the ever increasing bill.

Assuming that the federal government will continue to contribute the \$612 million a year to the cost of moving grain, economists tell us that by 1990 — and I suggest that is using the most generous interpretation of the Pepin plan — prairie farmers could be paying as much as 10 times the current crowrate to transport their grain to port. By the year 1990, the prairie farmer could be expected to pay \$2 billion a year for the movement of grain. That would mean an average freight rate in Saskatchewan of \$1.23 per bushel. The economic effect of the Pepin plan, taking this most generous interpretation, is a yearly drop in net farm income. A drop in farm income over a number of years has a very serious effect on the prairie economy.

Mr. Speaker, to bring it into more usable numbers, I would like to indicate that a \$1 decline in net farm income for a single year has the following impact. Farm investment in machinery and buildings (not including land) drops by 38 cents. Consumer spending on goods and services drops by 64 cents. There is a further drop of 22 cents in saving, urban construction and government revenues combined. This means, Mr. Speaker, that every \$1 less in net farm income represents a loss of \$1.24 to the prairie economy due to the multiplier effect in the economy. I would say that, as I understand it, is the very minimum; it would more than likely be larger.

A major portion of the Pepin plan will be felt by Saskatchewan for two reasons:

1. Sixty per cent of the prairie grain is produced in the province of Saskatchewan. This means that of the \$2 billion there would be more than \$1 billion coming right out of the province of Saskatchewan.
2. Saskatchewan farmers have the greatest distance to port for their grain. So if you get into the situation of variable rates, non-statutory rates and high rates, Saskatchewan is going to be charged the greatest amount for all the reasons given.

Mr. Speaker, the pocketbooks of everyone in the province of Saskatchewan will feel the effects.

I said before that this was the most generous interpretation of the Pepin plan. I want to bring to your attention just how bad the situation could get. Without a doubt some areas will feel the impact faster and will feel the impact greater. Most likely this impact in localized areas will then be felt throughout the whole province. In a given area the effect may be worse. If the increased freight rate causes farmers to reduce production and/or the businesses in that area to close their doors, this will have the effect of reducing not only the wealth generated in the province by the amount of the freight rate, but it will have the effect of causing a drop of the total production.

Grain production costs are not equal across the province, or on individual parcels of land. In some areas the production costs today are very close to the present returns. Any drop in income to the producer will mean a reduction in grain production as farmers stop cultivating marginal lands. So the resulting economic effect in that area could be a multiple of 2, 3 or 4 times the actual increase in the freight tariff.

Mr. Speaker, at the point where production costs exceed income, production stops. Under the proposed Pepin plan, using the most generous interpretation, the income of the average farmer will drop by almost \$16,000 by 1990.

Mr. Speaker, my gut reaction is that the annual increase in transportation costs will force consolidation of farm units, reduce the opportunity for diversification in the agricultural area, and bring into play the statements by the Conservative leader in the province of Saskatchewan that rural Saskatchewan must look elsewhere from agriculture for its economic viability. There would be fewer farms, fewer farmers, and fewer communities which depend upon the wealth generated by these farmers. All of what I've said does not take into account the impact of variable freight rates.

Mr. Speaker, the Progressive Conservative Party provincially and federally has been a party that has had a variable position on the crow. There is a report in the *Calgary Herald* of February 13, 1982, that says the conventional wisdom is that the Vegreville MP, Don Mazankowski, minister of transportation in the Clark government would have proceeded along lines very similar to the course Pepin has struck.

Mr. Speaker, this indicates why the Conservatives stand in this House and say that they support the crow but do not take the time to put into their speeches the reasons why they support the crow; simply, this is a new policy for the Conservative Party in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take and read some things from the Canadian Grain Commission, economics and statistics division, on grain deliveries at prairie points in the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, the shipping block 29, which is from Prince Albert west, takes in the Turtleford constituency. What I would like to do is just put on the record for those who are interested what 10 times the crowrate would mean to these communities in the Turtleford constituency. Starting at the bottom, the cost to the community of Spiritwood, where there was a delivery of 29,000 metric tonnes, would be \$1.4 million simply in the \$47 per metric tonne that it would cost to move that grain to port. That \$47 over and above what is already being paid. If you took a look at the cost to the community of Shell Lake, which is somewhat smaller than Spiritwood and which has substantially smaller deliveries, it would be \$423,000 to a community that has less than 400 people in it.

Mr. Speaker, the community of Medstead with a delivery last year in 1980-81 of 21,000 metric tonnes would lose somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$1 million.

Glaslyn, where the delivery was 27,000 metric tonnes would lose about \$1.3 million. This is out of some very small communities. So the impact is very substantial.

Mr. Speaker, in that same region there is another delivery point and that is the delivery point of Meadow Lake. It's in the constituency of Meadow Lake and I'd like to indicate to the members opposite why they should be preparing some speeches with a little bit of fact in them, and some reasons why they are prepared to support the crow.

The member for Meadow Lake should understand that in the one community — the major community in his constituency — the cost would be over \$3 million, and that is a substantial amount of money. If you apply the multiplier effect to that, you are looking at something over \$4 million for the community of Meadow Lake, and other communities would receive the same type of blow.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that this is one of the key issues in the province of Saskatchewan, and it will have a very large effect on the whole community. We must apply all the resources that we have to keeping the crowrate in place. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. McARTHUR: — Mr. Speaker, I too wish to join in this historic debate regarding the crowrate. I find it disappoint that with this ample opportunity for a thorough discussion and debate about this important subject, we are not having the members opposite joining us to explain exactly where they stand and to put forward on behalf of their party in this legislature and around the province the position they adopt and the position they accept with respect to this crowrate issue.

It is an issue that is too important for anyone to simply stand up and say, "Oh, me too; I'm in favour of the crow." It's an issue that should be discussed thoroughly so that we can clearly understand, and so the people of Saskatchewan can clearly understand, so that the farmers of Saskatchewan can clearly understand what you mean by, "Me too," and what you mean to represent, in your case, with respect to the crowrate question.

I want to talk about two themes this evening, as I talk about this crowrate question — two themes that I think are critically important, particularly when it comes to us, as elected representatives and politicians, dealing with this question.

The first has to do with responsibility, and the second has to do with trust. I say responsibility in terms of our responsibilities as elected legislators, as we deal with this question, and also responsibility in terms of understanding who bears the responsibility for this rather sorry state of affairs we find ourselves in now with respect to the crowrate.

I want to explore a little bit the historical background. Who is responsible for our finding ourselves in this particular position, and how did we end up with it?

Secondly, the question of trust — whom the people of Saskatchewan can trust, whom the farmers of Saskatchewan can trust to confront and fight the railways and the elevator companies, and the organizations that have become co-opted by these particular interests (organizations like the Palliser Wheat Growers, and the Western Commodity Coalition, and the Saskatchewan Stock Growers' Association, and the Western Canada Concept — the political party that advocates doing away with the crowrate) and who we can trust to carry out the battle to its completion to ensure that Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan farmers' interests are protected at the end of this debate and this fight.

I would say without doubt, Mr. Speaker, that this is the most important issue for Saskatchewan and for western Canada in the post-war period. The crowrate is absolutely essential to the survival of Saskatchewan farms, and to the survival of Saskatchewan agriculture as we know it. One need only look at and examine, without arguing in detail, the financial implications for Saskatchewan farms and Saskatchewan farmers of allowing freight rates to be set in accordance with the wishes and desires of the railways to know that the net return and the net income of Saskatchewan farmers, as it has been over the past few years, would be entirely wiped out as a result of this change.

One need say nothing more about the effect of the federal Pepin plan with respect to the crow than to point out that fundamental fact. It simply steals away the hard-earned income of farmers, and it passes it on to the railways and to the private grain companies and others that have an interest in this debate.

The crowrate is also, as guaranteed by statute and with an assurance of equal rate for equal distance in the transport of grain, essential to the survival of rural Saskatchewan and rural communities as we know them. That rural Saskatchewan as we know it is a network of communities all cross the prairie lands and parklands of this province, communities functioning as grain marketing centres and as trading centres and as centres of cultural and recreational activity, as centres where people can retire and live out their lives after farming and working in our rural communities, as a widespread collection and a network of centres supporting the fabric, supporting the historic nature of rural Saskatchewan. Therefore, we must recognize that without the crow, without the statutory rates, without the protection of equal rates for equal distances, these communities so important to rural Saskatchewan will be devastated.

The crow is also essential to the strength and stability of the Saskatchewan economy. I could talk about the importance of this crowrate issue and perhaps should, but I'm not going to take the time of the House to spend any time on it this evening. The member for Regina South, if he believed in the crow, would perhaps talk about this issue as well, but shows no willingness to do so, which indicates where his beliefs stand, I'm quite confident.

I could talk at some length about the importance of the crow, not only to our farmers, not only to our farms, not only to agriculture in rural communities, but to our cities like Regina and Saskatoon, which may not appear to many to have much interest in the crowrate issue. But I want to say to you, Mr. Speaker, that the interest of the cities is almost as fundamental as is the interest of farmers and rural communities in this question.

The simple fact of the matter is that if the railways, the rail companies, of this country are permitted to extract the kinds of returns that they intend to extract as a result of the Pepin plan from farmers, they extract them from farmers most importantly, but they extract them from Saskatchewan. They extract them from the Saskatchewan economy. They don't stay in Saskatchewan. The money goes to those eastern centres of finance and ownership that control the CPR and that control the Cargill grains and so on. That money, not staying here in Saskatchewan, is not spent here in Saskatchewan, does not reach the businesses and trading centres and the industrial and commercial centres of our province. The multiplier effect that comes from that does not have the impact that it would have, if it stayed here, on the overall commercial and business activity of this province.

The result of that is not only will our farms, our towns, and our rural communities be devastated but so will our cities. And I would say to you, Mr. Speaker, that it is extremely important that we all recognize and understand that this is an issue that cuts across all of Saskatchewan, that affects all interests in Saskatchewan. It is not a farmer interest. It is not a rural interest. It is a Saskatchewan concern, and it cuts across all of us and knits us all together with one common interest and one common concern here in this province.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Rosthern made reference to the fact that we must be focusing on the enemies in this dispute. That's not a word that I particularly like and yet I think he makes a point. I wouldn't say that we should necessarily talk about enemies within the framework of this serious dispute, but his point does raise a very fundamental and important question; that is the fact that there are differing interests within this dispute. There are those who clearly and desperately and almost without letting anything get in their way want to see this crowrate changed. There are those who want to see the statutory protection for farmers removed. There are those who want to see the protection for equal rates for equal distances removed. There are those who want to see the free enterprise economy, so-called, running free in the railway grain transportation system here in this province. And I'll take the hon. member for Rosthern's definition that in that sense we have enemies within this dispute. We have, here in Saskatchewan, economic interests and social interests and political interests which are fundamentally in conflict with what we believe and understand to be in our interests of Saskatchewan.

And it raises the question that if we have these interests, why are we in this position that we are in today? Well, clearly, we have a number of interests coming together here. We have a number of differing kinds of interests with one common objective and one common idea in mind. And these have been mentioned to a degree. We have the railway companies and the private grain companies which desperately want to see this crowrate removed. The railways have never liked or accepted the crowrate. That's an historical fact here in Canada. It's not a surprise. One need only look at the whole history of the crowrate as it has existed here in this country, and he will find that the railways, after conceding the acceptance of the crowrate, have never accepted and wanted this crowrate.

The reason for that is relatively simple. As a monopoly, it is in the interests of these railways to be able, without any constraints, without any control, without any regulation, to set the rate for the hauling of this grain commodity which they have a monopoly on, because that provides the opportunity for a classic monopoly operation. They extract the wealth from those who are captives of the monopoly — in this case the farmers. They extract that wealth without thought of justice or right, without thought of equity, without thought of caring, because that's not the business they're in. They extract that wealth, take it upon themselves, and use it for whatever purposes they wish to use it for: to pay dividends to their shareholders, to pay for other costly investments within the system, to enrich their own salaries and earnings within the management structure, or whatever. This is a classic game that's played by monopolies.

So we shouldn't be surprised that the railways have wanted this and that the railways now want this, and the railways are very much behind what is in store for us as a result of this Pepin plan. And of course, we've got Cargill Grain and the private grain companies which would like to see the flexible rates brought in — the variable rates — so that they can get rid of the widespread (and what they call inefficient and expensive) collection system for grain. They could build their few limited inland terminals. They could do away with the wheat board. They wouldn't have the worries with the co-ordination of the transportation system. They wouldn't have the worries with the orderly marketing system. It would be the first step, on their part, toward breaking down that whole structure so that they, too, could get their hands on the wealth and the income and the earnings of the farmers. And fair enough. That's the business they're in. That's the game they're in. Why shouldn't they go after the income and wealth of the farmers, the private interests controlled outside this province, not controlled by farmers, which have their own particular reasons for being in the business they're in?

So it's not surprising that we have that particular interest going after the crowrate. And it's not surprising that they've been going after the crowrate for many, many years.

But we have, in addition to that, and have had growing through time, added interests which have been coming together with the railways and the private grain trade in order to attack the crowrate. And it's interesting to note that one of the interests in this has been the federal government of this country, and this has not been a recent thing. This has not been something that developed simply in the days since Jean-Luc Pepin became Minister of Agriculture.

In fact, if one looks at the history of the attacks upon the crowrate and the grain transportation system and the orderly marketing system, one can find the beginnings of this in the 1962-64 period when we had a federal Conservative government in Ottawa which began to dismantle the orderly marketing system, opened up the marketing of grain to private feed mills and the like. You may remember Alvin Hamilton was the minister of agriculture at that time and he began to identify that the crowrate, in their terms, was causing problems to the efficient working of the grain marketing and the grain handling system.

Those were some of the early roots of the government attack upon the crowrate. One can find it in the record; one can find it in the statements made by federal Conservative politicians at that time. The momentum of all of that picked up in the late '60s and early

1970s. We had the federal task force on agriculture in which one can begin to find suggestions about the crow being a difficulty because of the transportation-related inefficiencies and other things that were creating problems according to this task force. You can find it in the establishment of the grains group under Otto Lang, and statements made by Otto Lang with regard to the unacceptability of the crowrate.

As a matter of minor interest I was deputy minister of agriculture in this province back in the early part of the 1970s and mid-1970s. I attended numerous federal-provincial meetings in which federal officials and federal ministers, including the Hon. Otto Lang, made constant and continual reference to the need for this crowrate to be eliminated — indicating that this crowrate was causing a fundamental problem and that something should be done about it. In that attack on the crowrate he was joined by some very, very, interesting organizations and groups and it was something that I never totally understood at the time, but of which I now have a better picture.

It was a strange coalition, as some members here will agree when I outline some of the participants. Organizations like the Saskatchewan Stock Growers' Association joined with this Liberal minister, Otto Lang, to mount the attack upon this crowrate . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . That's right. I remember seeing this person to whom you make reference. The hon. member for Saskatoon Riversdale makes reference to a potential candidate for the Western Canada Concept who was also party to this attack. Organizations like the Palliser Wheat Growers' Association used to carry the same line and mount the same attack on the crowrate. And it was being identified by the mid-1970s as the fundamental issue.

It's also interesting who also joined in this Liberal coalition of interests and groups which were mounting the political attack. Would you believe the federal minister of agriculture from Alberta, for instance? He was a Tory who unequivocally and without reservation would state that he agreed with Otto Lang. He did not agree with Otto Lang on very much, but he would say that he agreed with him on this crowrate issue — the crowrate should go; the crowrate is a problem and we must get rid of the crowrate.

One also used to see at some of these meetings where this item would be discussed federal Conservative MPs who would join hands with the Palliser Wheat Growers' Association and with the Saskatchewan Stock Growers' Association in mounting this attack on the crowrate.

I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that it's very, very important to understand this background of the bringing together of the political interests with the private grain trade and the railway interest, because it is the bringing together of these interests that has provided the momentum and the possibility of success behind all of this.

But I want to say to the hon. members that I also find one thing significant and interesting about this kind of pressure, coming on the one hand from, not surprisingly, the railway companies and the grain trade and so on, and on the other hand, somewhat more surprisingly, from this mixture of so-called political interests — including these farm organizations and the right wing of the Liberal Party and Otto Lang and a number of Conservative politicians.

I think it's of considerable interest to note that their whole effort was given some of the legitimacy that they desired by a group of academics, a group of university professors, some of them located here in this province and some located in universities outside of this province, who joined together with some of these other interests to provide some

of the rationale and some of the justification for what was being talked about by these particular interests. It was these university professors, working out of agricultural economic faculties in the universities — mainly in western Canada but all across Canada; not all professors within these universities, but a number of these professors — who took it upon themselves to make this question of transportation, and the crowrate and questions related to grain marketing, a matter of particular concern and interest to them. And I can personally attest to this being true. I don't make any attempt or claim, as I notice some professed politicians do, being good doctors, to be able to speak any more highly or any more intelligently about this issue than any other member of this House, and certainly I would make no claim to be able to speak about it with more knowledge and more understanding than the Minister of Agriculture, who is well ahead of anyone if the legislature in terms of his ability to talk about and represent this issue.

But I do want to say that my training is in agricultural economics; that's where my background is. I worked in this field for a number of years and came to know the personalities very well. I became very familiar with not only the writing and the publications, but with the teaching, and with what was being done in the classrooms, and what was being done in the seminars and the extension courses around the province and so on. And through that period of time, it became very clear that we did have and do have still through 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976 and so on right on up to 1978 and beyond — but it took a little different form after that — a little group of academics who were making it their business to provide the justification and legitimization for the arguments and case being made by the railways and the grain companies and these right-wing farm organizations which have mounted the attack on the crow.

It's very interesting that the spiritual leader, if you like, the person who provided the overall sense of justification for what they were doing, was a good doctor at the University of Saskatchewan, teaching agricultural economics at that time, by the name of Dr. Grant Devine.

I have to attest to you that this is true. This was a Saskatchewan boy teaching agricultural economics at the University of Saskatchewan, claiming to be a professional, claiming to be basing his work on research, claiming to be basing his work on objective analysis. What did this man do? And this is fine, he has every right to do so. I am not denying his right to do so, let me be very clear about that. Academics should be free to pursue where their research takes them, and to draw their own conclusions in their own minds to the best that their intelligence allows them. Here we have Dr. Devine, plus a number of others, going around to grain marketing seminars talking about the crowrate. You can be sure what they were saying about the crowrate. I don't have to ask you whether you know. In the classes they were teaching, there is no question that the crowrate was a focus of what was going on, or in their research and in their publications; some of that has already been pointed out. And there is additional material, let me assure you. But some of it has already been pointed out in documents such as this and others. Some ask, "What does this indicate?" Let me tell you that this very well indicates exactly what was being written and what was being provided as part of the overall attack that has been mounted on the crowrate over the last number of years.

My point, Mr. Speaker, is exactly this: is it any wonder, and is anyone surprised, to find that Jean-Luc Pepin from Ottawa is not an expert on western Canadian agriculture, that Jean-Luc Pepin is not an expert on prairie agriculture and Jean-Luc Pepin, being a member of the Trudeau cabinet, is not a very good listener to what the farmers and the

public say? So is it any wonder that we find Jean-Luc Pepin making the proposal he has, when he's had this tremendous, incredible pressure from the railway companies, from the CPR with their interests, with the kind of connections they have with the Liberal Party, when he's been having pressure from the Cargill Grain Company and the other private grain trade, when he's been having pressure from federal conservative politicians, from the likes of Otto Lang, who is now an executive in a private grain company, when he's been having this kind of pressure from these organizations, right-wing organizations of farmers (as I call them) and in addition, when it is all justified and tied together and given a rationale by the work of what are apparently legitimate and qualified academics such as Dr. Grant Devine? This is my point. It is no wonder that Jean-Luc Pepin has been convinced by these arguments.

I'm not saying that Dr. Devine phoned up Jean-Luc Pepin and said, "Say, I think it's time you moved on the crow." I'm not suggesting that. What I'm telling you is this. In my view, what has been happening here is the end result of a number of years of activity and the coming together of a whole group of interests. And not the least of these were the academics, the Dr. Grant Devines of this world, who were out there pushing and selling this idea and convincing students, farmers and government officials and politicians, legitimizing and giving justification for this case. Let me say to you, Mr. Speaker, that that is the kind of dilemma, the kind of situation which we now face.

I could make reference to some of the kinds of things which these academics have been saying, and perhaps I should take a minute just to indicate some of these types of things. They are very much part of what you see here and what you see elsewhere, and what anyone who wishes to take the time to find out what was taught in these classes and what went on in these seminars will see.

They have been indicating that the railway transportation system is critically important to western Canada and that we have a problem in terms of capacity. And so, they say, the only way we can expand the capacity is to give the railways the right to charge higher rates to extract from farmers the wealth and the money necessary to build that capacity. They say that the source of the money which the railways need is the farmers — go after the farmers, they can't protect themselves. It's good old free market, free enterprise economics.

There is no question that it is true in that sense. The farmers are easily victimized by this kind of thing. This is what the economists have been writing. They have been saying, "Look, this kind of money is needed, the farmers are sitting there, they're vulnerable, why don't we take off the statutory protection and let the railways go after that money?" They say the railways will use that money to build lines to ship coal or whatever in the Rockies, and expand the rail system east and west — that kind of thing.

That is one of the cases these academics have been making, if you go through their writings. I ask you to judge for yourself whether that kind of legitimization for the crow moves which Jean-Luc Pepin has made is justified and acceptable.

They have been going on to say such things as the crowrate is an obstacle to the expansion of processing and of secondary industry in western Canada and in Saskatchewan, and is a problem and a difficulty in terms of expanded livestock production. I would like the hon. members opposite to have a look at the report of the meat-grain interface project. It is almost difficult to say, but nevertheless this particular project was an interesting project. Volume 1 of the proceedings published in this form was edited by D. G. Devine and R. J. Sparling.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Not another one!

HON. MR. McARTHUR: — Oh, there are lots more. The life of an academic involves a lot of teaching, a lot of writing, a lot of being out talking to people — particularly if you're interested in pushing a particular issue. I'll give you one quote from an article written in this publication by Dr. D.G. Devine, associate professor (he edited the book but he also had some articles in here which were his own), and Dr. C.M. Williams. I know and like Dr. Williams very well. Some of you will know Red Williams. Red Williams has not been absent from politics, himself, in Saskatchewan. His views on the crowrate are well known. He has stood for election, I believe, in the Saskatoon area.

It is interesting to see the political coalition involved in this publication. They also say in this publication such things as, "Thus, economic distortions have developed as a direct result of the statutory rate." And they go on. There are all kinds of things like that which are said and taught in the course of the work that is being done.

What we're driving at here is that somehow we would have more secondary industry and more livestock being produced in western Canada if we did away with the crowrate. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the good doctor . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — He is not here.

HON. MR. McARTHUR: — He is not here? The good doctor is not very interested in participating in this debate, that's obvious. I would like to ask the good doctor how he explains (just as a question) that the flour milling industry, even though flour has had the statutory protection of the crowrate, has all gone to eastern Canada, by and large, except for a limited amount to serve the prairie market. The flour milling industry has left. The crowrate issue is obviously extraneous to this question. The problem of maintaining processing industries and livestock industries and so on in western Canada, in the Prairies, is a much more fundamental question that can be addressed by this crowrate argument.

The crowrate has been made into a whipping boy by these academics who dress it up in all kinds of fine words about economic resource allocation, efficiency in the use of our resources, and the good doctor has much of this in his writings. What this is, is the cover for getting rid of the crow. They know full well, if they have pursued their research, that getting rid of the crow in no way guarantees or brings back the processing industries to western Canada.

One would expect that if these academics (for whom I have all kinds of respect) were doing their research well, and were being honest, they would be pointing these things out. But no, Mr. Speaker, what do they do? These particular academics go on making these kinds of arguments.

Now, they are not silly, so I can only believe that they are providing part of the cover story, part of the legitimization, part of the justification for this attack on the crow that has been mounted. It has been mounted, as we well know, by the railway companies. It has been mounted by the private grain trade, by the Conservative politicians, and by certain other interests such as the Palliser Wheat Growers' Association, the Saskatchewan Stock Growers' Association, the Western Commodity Coalition, or whatever they call themselves, and now the Western Canada Concept — this whole group all fits together.

Well there are other kinds of arguments that are made. There are arguments such as fixed rates and equal rates for equal distances cause inefficiencies. I think the good doctor himself at one point said that we could only have 21 points in the grain-handling system . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — No. 17 I thought it was.

HON. MR. McARTHUR: — Well, I think I heard him say 21 once at a public meeting or at a seminar, but perhaps on another occasion he said 17. The good doctor is well known for his case in this regard. With 17 delivery points, we would have efficiency, and the way to get that is to get rid of this crowrate, to get flexible rates and, as a result of that, we can have an efficient grain-handling system and an efficient grain transportation system. Presumably, there would be very little left of rural Saskatchewan, but it sure would be efficient. This is what the good doctor has been proposing, and on and on it goes.

The point I want to make (and I want to make it again) is that we simply must understand the history of what has happened here if we are going to be effective in fighting. We must understand who has been a part of not only making the case for this crowrate change, but for working it up, for developing the strategies for bringing together the coalitions, for giving them legitimacy, for giving them arguments they can use, and for giving them the kind of things they can sell politically and otherwise. Don't ever underestimate the importance of having, before you move, the case being made by people who have some form of academic or research credibility. And this is what we found in this case. Now that's their right; I don't have any argument with their right to do so. The point I want to make is that, given the critical importance of this, it is important that we come back to those questions of responsibility and trust that I mentioned earlier.

First of all, I would hope in a serious issue such as this that each and everyone of us would be prepared to share, accept and take our responsibility for whatever our part has been in this. As is well documented, the party on this side of the House historically, both at the federal and provincial levels, on every occasion that this crowrate question has been raised, has stated clearly and without equivocation that change in the crowrate is wrong and we will object to it and fight it.

This is something that we have not come upon in a revelation over the past two months. This something that this party has believed and fought for, for the last 10, 20, 30 and more years of its existence. Always has this party stood firm with that. And we accept our responsibility. Those who disagree should prove us wrong. We challenge you. Prove to us that our position is wrong. We believe it's right. We are making the case and will continue to make the case. But I also say that providing this proof is fundamentally the responsibility of those who have believed that our position is wrong and who have been out there working against our position. It's their responsibility, not to have recent revelations and conversions out of some political expediency, but to stand up and tell us why they believe we are wrong and defend their position and make their case, because we're prepared to take on that debate. It's an important debate, and we believe it should be done responsibly and with a clear identification of where we stand and who stands on what side of the argument.

I think that is a fundamental question of political morality that relates to responsibility within politics. And I have some very, very serious questions about a person who

aspires to be a member of this legislature and who aspires to be, heaven forbid, premier of this province who is not prepared to stand up and admit and accept responsibility for the words and writings that he has provided over the past year, 2 years, 5 years, 10 years. I have some fundamental questions about the credibility of that person and about that person's integrity in political terms, and I would question very much that person's ability to represent the people of Saskatchewan on an issue as fundamental as this in any form or capacity.

Mr. Speaker, I raise a second point related to that, and that is the question of trust. As I indicated, we on this side of the House all say that this question is fundamental. We have said that for years and years and years. The members on the opposite side of the House, well, they've suddenly discovered this question is fundamental over the last month. Is it a month and a half? I'm losing track of dates. But it's been a relatively recent conversion, as is indicated by all the records that go with things they've represented the organizations they've associated with and what their representatives have said on various occasions . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . That's right. What we obviously can expect to see in the not too distant future is a Tory certificate of guarantee; if anyone asks you, "Do you support the crowrate?" you give them the Tory certificate of guarantee that they support the crowrate just to keep the records straight . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . It's signed by Colin Thatcher, aspiring leader of the Conservative Party and perhaps co-signed by Dr. Devine and no doubt witnessed by Jim Garner. This will be part of creating trust in the minds of farmers about the position that this party opposite represents to provide reassurance — the Tory guarantee.

Well, I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that to a very important extent what is going on in Saskatchewan and what is going on in rural Saskatchewan right now is much more than a debate — it's a search on the part of farmers and citizens to determine who it is that they can trust to represent them, to join with them in fighting for this important and critical issue. They're looking around, Mr. Speaker, and these are difficult times for them.

There were times in the past when farmers and citizens of Saskatchewan on this issue thought they could look to the federal government. They believed they had the protection of the Parliament of Canada and of the Government of Canada and now they find that they cannot depend upon that. There was a time when they thought that they could depend on the opposition party and now they look at the record of the opposition party in Ottawa and they find that they cannot depend on them. The farmers and the citizens of Saskatchewan realize and understand that what they have to do is join together with people who they can trust, who they can believe will fight this thing through to the end, to victory. They know and understand that in unity there is strength, that in joining together we can win, but they know we can only do that if those who are believable and those who will fight and fight honestly are the ones they join together with.

Mr. Speaker, what you see going around out in rural Saskatchewan today is that the farmers and the citizens of Saskatchewan are looking at these members opposite and at the Tory party and are saying, "What is it that this Dr. Devine really does stand for?" Can you trust a man who writes and says and teaches and talks about one thing no more than a year or two or three ago and who now says, "Oh, well, no that isn't what I meant. I don't believe that. I put my finger to the wind and I find that it hurts a little bit and I'm getting a little pressure so what I really believe it quite the opposite."

Will the citizens and the farmers of Saskatchewan put their trust and confidence in

people like that? I don't believe they will and what I think is fundamental is that they have the chance and the opportunity to make a determination of that because it is going to be critically important that we have the unity, the determination, and the collective will to stop this policy and change the path that's being followed. There is no question that, if one looks honestly at the record of Dr. Devine, one cannot trust the good doctor because he does not believe what he now says.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. GARNER: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's nice to be back in the Legislative Assembly again . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'm going to try to stick to the high road, Mr. Speaker, but it's going to be very difficult.

I think to start out, I would like to express a concern on behalf of all of the people of Saskatchewan; this is not only affecting the farmers in Saskatchewan, it's affecting the towns as well. I read a letter into the record from the town of Unity sent to the Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin, Minister of Transport, Ottawa.

Dear Sir: The council of the town of Unity would like to go on record as passing a motion stating that we oppose any changes to the crowrate. We do not feel that the crow freight rates should be restructured for export grain.

Your proposed plan is guaranteeing the railways adequate compensation for the movement of grain, but the farmers are not being guaranteed a fixed rate or equal rate for equal distance.

Yours truly, Administrator for the town of Unity

Mr. Speaker, in this debate we have just heard from the Minister of Education. He starts talking about morality. We can talk about hypocrites, but then we can talk about the Attorney General and the Premier! Mr. Speaker, these two lawyers in the province of Saskatchewan are talking about the crowrate. Now can you tell me what effect it is going to have on them when the farmers of Saskatchewan have to pay more for shipping their grain? No, Mr. Speaker, the hypocrites are starting to come out now because the election draws nearer. "We have to have an issue. We have to try to fool the people. We did it last time by scaring the senior citizens and lying about medicare."

Now, Mr. Speaker, we are going to have the big Saskatchewan lie number two — the crowrate. I wonder what the next one is going to be? If this NDP government opposite is trusted to deal with the federal government on the crowrate, we know when the decision is going to be made. We know who will make the decision. It will be Mr. Chretien, the Attorney General of Saskatchewan, and Mr. Trudeau at 3 a.m. over a 40-ounce glass of water. We know who will come out on the short end of the stick. It will be the farmers of Saskatchewan, because the hypocrites don't care.

Mr. Speaker, I have heard the members opposite talk about the great research they have done on this. I would just like to point out one example of how well they do their research regarding other issues. It directly affects the crowrate in the province of Saskatchewan. Here we have a little pamphlet sent out, called "Coffee Row: Notes from the New Democratic Party Caucus Research Office." Conservative promises involve impossible costs and voodoo economics, they say. Heavy politics, heavy politics! It would cost millions if the Conservatives were to have a utility rate freeze, they say. Now

the costs, Mr. Speaker, go from a low of \$35.1 million, but they go to a high of \$558.3 million.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to point out the great depth of brilliance of the NDP government when it comes to research. The total revenue for Sask Power last year was only \$447,000,310. It means if we have a rate increase in the province of Saskatchewan we are going to be giving them money back.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. GARNER: — Now, Mr. Speaker, those are the government's figures from their brochure by the minister in charge of Sask Power who has just been talking about the moral majority. Those are their figures. I know the people of Saskatchewan will be quite pleased, not only that under a Conservative government we will freeze the utility rates for one year, but according to the NDP we will give them money back. They talk about a New Deal for People; that's a Super Deal for People. But let's be practical, Mr. Speaker, I know you don't believe all of this by the NDP. You know what the facts are.

Mr. Speaker, all afternoon and all night we've heard about Dr. Grant Devine. I think he's a great man, and he's going to be premier of this province. I know the members opposite don't want that, but he's going to be premier of this province. And there's another thing — we talk about the Premier and the Attorney General. I don't know what their permit book numbers are. Maybe they haven't even got one. I think that's likely closer to the truth. But the truth is something that sometimes just seems to evade and escape them. They seem to slither around here and slither around there and just flirt with the truth.

But, Mr. Speaker, Dr. Grant Devine is a farmer in Saskatchewan, is a permit book holder, and that's how he drives his income. He is truly concerned about the people of Saskatchewan. No hypocrites come from this side of the House. They're on that side of the House.

Mr. Speaker, I'm trying to read a statement into the record by Grant Devine, leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Saskatchewan and very hopefully then we can clear up any doubts at all that the NDP government has misled, and lied to, the people of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, the people are not continually going to be accepting a government that is going to flirt with the truth. This is the statement:

Dear Fellow Citizens: Farmers cannot afford to pay higher transportation costs for their grain because they are being hurt by spiralling costs in other areas. The Trudeau government's announcement must be viewed with extreme caution and skepticism. The proposed changes to the freight rate are unclear and unfair and leave far too many unanswered questions.

One thing is very clear, though. Saskatchewan agriculture producers simply cannot afford an increase in freight rates, or anything else for that matter, because of other cost increases. Fertilizer and fuel prices have doubled. Interest rates are up 100 per cent and grain prices down. The crowrate must remain statutory. Any revenue shortfall to the railroads must be paid by the federal government. Large increases in revenue must be allocated to the transportation systems in the near future, to take full advantage of the market potential for all commodities.

The principle behind the statutory rates is to ensure control over a monopoly during these difficult economic times. Controlling costs is extremely important to Saskatchewan farmers. Farmers will be asking themselves two questions about these proposed changes. "Are they fair? Can the Trudeau government be trusted?" The reply to both questions is no.

And I think just to add something there, Mr. Speaker, the NDP government of Saskatchewan cannot be trusted because, Mr. Speaker, they don't really care. They can put on all the grandstanding performances they want, but how does it really affect them? Their main claim to fame is to have power and keep power. And, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan are not going to let them have it back.

Back to the letter, Mr. Speaker:

Western Canadians will give the federal government \$52 billion over the next four years as a result of the energy agreement. As well, the Trudeau government will subsidize Chrysler and Ford in eastern Canada. Why do they object to helping the western Canadian farmer?

In answer to the second question, western Canadians have little reason to believe that the Trudeau government in Ottawa will protect our interest in the future. The real question is this: who is responsible for Trudeau being in power anyway? The Saskatchewan NDP held the balance of power in a minority PC government and the NDP voted against Westerners like Hnatyshyn and Mazankowski to defeat the Clark government. The crow would not be threatened today if the Saskatchewan NDP had not put Trudeau back in office.

Now I hear a cry of laughter, Mr. Speaker, and I'm a hypocrite again. Who put Trudeau in power? It was the NDP. Whom were the farmers of Saskatchewan supposed to trust? The NDP? Not a chance. They're not going to trust you. On November 12, 1979, in Ottawa the NDP brought the crowrate to the negotiating table on all revenues and proposed a trade. Then they offered half of Saskatchewan's future oil revenue to Mr. Trudeau. Then they voted for Trudeau. Whose side are they on anyway?

Now, Mr. Speaker, I kind of like that last little sentence there. You know: save the crow, let Blakeney and Trudeau go. Mr. Speaker, that sums it up for the PC Party of Saskatchewan. Without a doubt we have to have the crowrate retained in the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, I couldn't be a hypocrite and talk about something like this. It just isn't in me.

Mr. Speaker, what will happen to the family farm if the crowrate is taken away? We know what is starting to happen to the family farm already. Farmers have left the province of Saskatchewan. Why? Because of land bank. Farmers are being forced off their own land by government tax dollars — their own tax dollars. The government is outbidding the young farmer who tries to expand his operation. He is competing with the provincial NDP government in the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, that's unfair and that's a hardship on all young farmers in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, we have seen in the province of Saskatchewan increasing utility rates which are forcing the farmers' backs to the wall. They can't pay more and they shouldn't have to pay more. Under a PC government they won't have to pay more because we will be supporting the crowrate.

Residential power rates, Mr. Speaker, from 1975 to 1981, rose 86.5 per cent. Who were they collecting this on the backs of? The taxpayers of Saskatchewan. Commercial rates from 1975 to 1982 rose 83.3 per cent. Mr. Speaker, the total, from 1975 to 1982, of power rate increases to all the people of Saskatchewan, which the crowrate would affect, is 354 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Saskatchewan through beef stabilization has backed the cattlemen up to the wall. Now through its wishy-washy stand on the crowrate, the grain farmers of Saskatchewan are backed up against the wall and that's why when the Premier of Saskatchewan can screw up enough courage to call a provincial election the NDP will not the government in Saskatchewan. Grant Devine will be the premier and we will have a Progressive Conservative government in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, about three weeks ago, Mr. Kevin Hirsch of CFQC television in Saskatoon obtained some leaked federal cabinet documents pertaining to the crowrate. You know, it seems to be becoming a habit in this country of ours for these leaked documents to come out. I mean we've just heard tonight of a leaked budget document. You know, every time we come to this Assembly, there are upset strikers out there.

Mr. Speaker, the farmers of Saskatchewan cannot afford to pay any more for transporting their grain. We and the farmers of Saskatchewan cannot trust types like the Attorney General and the Premier of Saskatchewan who have no real serious concern about the farmers of Saskatchewan because they know it won't affect them directly. Indirectly they are going to lose power, and that's what they want to maintain. No matter what the cost or who gets hurt, to them the end justifies the means.

Mr. Speaker, we are forcing the cattlemen out of Saskatchewan through beef stabilization. The minister responsible for Sask Power and the minister of Sask Tel are taxing and taxing and taxing people, and now a new ploy in the NDP train is to pass over all of the farmers. Sell or trade the crowrate off is the real position of the NDP in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. They are the hypocrites who put it on the bargaining table.

Since everyone has had a little quote tonight, Mr. Speaker, I have one that I think we should have in the record too. It has to do with remarks by Premier Allan Blakeney, February 8, 1982, in the *Globe and Mail*.

So you have to be more definite in public than in fact you feel mentally, and having done that, when you go behind closed doors, you say, "That's my position by I may be wrong. Have you got some arguments?"

There's the little wishy-washy stand. You know, Mr. Speaker, it depends on whom he is talking to . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, I don't think the people of Saskatchewan are sure what he says either. I am very glad that you got the point. That's the first time that it hasn't shot over your head. Very good, you can stay in the front benches.

Mr. Speaker, it's like when the gas tax goes up, from one side of his mouth the Premier says, "Oh, that Trudeau is a bad guy." From the other side he says, "Oh, that's great. I'm getting more tax dollars." On the backs of the people of Saskatchewan. That's the man that we should trust to negotiate the crowrate? No, Mr. Speaker, he's put it on the bargaining table once before. The farmers of Saskatchewan cannot continue to trust a

man like that.

We in the Progressive Conservative Party believe the crowrate has to remain in order to keep the farms viable in the province of Saskatchewan, because if the crowrate goes not only will the farms in Saskatchewan go, but so will small businesses and eventually the cities.

Mr. Speaker, as I have stated before, we very hopefully will see this flowery document that we've seen a little bit of on television tonight. I must say that it will help the farmers of Saskatchewan if they can burn purple gas in their tandem axle trucks. It is very nice to see the government listening to this policy of the PC Party. Oh, I see the Attorney General laughing now; he's never heard that before. He has never heard before of removing the sales tax on children's clothes — Graham Taylor's policy, PC policy. They are finally starting to see the light, Mr. Speaker, but they're just going to be a day late and a dollar short and quite a few votes short in the next provincial election.

Mr. Speaker, I hear them talking about bricks, so maybe they are going to have a brick factory in the next budget. It seems to me I remember talk about a brick factory in the 1940s. I hear the Minister of Health talking about the problems he can solve. Have you got that letter, Gerry? I'd better not put that in the record. We'll let the lawyers deal with that. Back to the crowrate.

Mr. Speaker, the truth about the PC position on the crowrate, and then I'm going to let one of my colleagues speak, I think, because we want to keep this on the line of truth tonight. The crowrate must remain. The shortfall must be paid for by the federal government. We oppose any plan to use Saskatchewan tax dollars or the heritage fund to buy into the CPR . . . (inaudible interjections) . . .

Mr. Speaker, I was going to quit, but that brings up another point now, and I just can't help it. Mr. Speaker, the CPR got millions of dollars and millions of acres of land when the railroad was put through this country. Now, years later, Mr. Speaker, there is this heritage fund that the NDP tells us they have, and I'd sure like to see some of those dollars go on this table right here for power rates, senior citizens, education, health, ambulance services. We don't seem to see any of that money go to those people, but we can still buy out Norcanair. Mr. Speaker, can you tell me, or can any member opposite tell me, what benefit the heritage fund will be if it's all given away to the CPR? What benefit is that going to be to the people of Saskatchewan? It's not going to be, Mr. Speaker. The CPR has had enough; they've taken enough of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, the CPR has got to provide the rolling stock, the rails and move the farmers' grain.

We were told that by this spring there's a chance that the price of wheat could go down. How can any farmer, Mr. Speaker, pay more for hauling his grain and get less for it? But under the NDP system, that might be okay. Under a PC government in Saskatchewan, that won't happen . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Mr. Speaker, we hear the hypocrite talking. Maybe he will enter this debate . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . That is not, no it isn't. You look in your own book. Challenge it. Go ahead. I know you wouldn't, because you haven't got what it takes to tell the truth to the people of Saskatchewan. It's something that evades you. And I can stand in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, and honestly say that as a farmer in Saskatchewan I can't afford to pay any more for grain transportation. Neither can the other farmers of

Saskatchewan. Maybe the NDP lawyers would like to pay more, but the farmers can't. I will be supporting the motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NELSON: — I was somewhat interested by some of the remarks the hon. member for Wilkie made, and I just felt that I had to make a few comments on them. The first one that he made that really caught my ear was: what effect would abolishing the crowrate have on lawyers? That was what I understood him to say. How shallow! How typical of the PC Party opposite. Everyone in the province of Saskatchewan, everyone in western Canada will be affected economically by abolishing the crowrate and, if he doesn't know it now, he certainly should.

The next thing he wondered about, Mr. Speaker, was: "Hey, what next will these NDPers be bailing up for an election issue?" Well, Mr. Speaker, may I say to them, look to your own statements and those of your leaders, and that's what we'll be bringing up in the election, because what you say is what you are. What you say is what you are, Mr. Speaker, and these people are trying to dodge the things they have said in a deathbed repentance, a prayer that the people of Saskatchewan will believe what they have got to say.

The member for Wilkie read his beautiful deathbed repentance letter from the Progressive Conservative Party, and I think he should be asked as he heads out the door: now what did they say last month and what will they say next month or next year? He says, "The NDP doesn't care." I think he said, "The NDP don't care."

Who is leading the fight for the crow? Are the PCs? Not much change. It's the New Democratic Party under the capable leadership of our Minister of Agriculture.

By some strange reason, he was able to bring the power rates in under the crow debate. Funny thing, he doesn't bother to mention what the power rates are in his sunny Alberta. He doesn't seem to care about that. When you talk about sunny Alberta and try to make a comparison with Saskatchewan they say, "We don't live in Alberta; we don't live in El Salvador; we don't care what goes on there." They don't like the comparisons with sunny Alberta, Mr. Speaker. They don't like the comparisons that were made with their PC government that was in Manitoba for a very short time.

Then remember, Mr. Speaker, they talked in terms of negotiation for the crowrate. As somebody said here, Mr. Speaker, it's not up for negotiation as far as we are concerned. It's a deal of confederation. The CPR has acres and acres of land, sections of land, all across Canada. They have the mineral rights for that land and they received huge amounts of money and assistance for building those railroads. Out of that gift from the people of Canada they built a financial empire of mines, ships, hotels, realties and what have you.

There is no negotiation as far as we are concerned, Mr. Speaker. If the crow must go, as far as we are concerned, the CPR and CP holdings must relinquish their rights to those things that were given to them and all the assets that were developed under the gift to that CPR.

I'd like to summarize, Mr. Speaker, what the member for Rosetown-Elrose had to say a very short time ago as far as the crowrate is concerned. What did he say? "You have to take your head out of the sand, Government of Saskatchewan. The crow must go." I'd

like to summarize, very briefly, everything that Grant Devine had to say, and that's easy to do. I'd like to summarize everything that the man had to say on the crowrate after years and years of research. What did he say? As the economist says, what was the bottom line? "The crow must go." Then the member for Thunder Creek came along, and for once, Mr. Speaker, he agreed with his leader. "The crow must go. We'll fight an election on that one," he said. Ah, yes! Then came that Sterling Lyon, the former premier of Manitoba. What did he have to say about the crow? "The crow must be changed," he said, and PCs all across Canada echoed and re-echoed their statements.

But the NDP doesn't care about the people. No, they are not responsible. They've stood for the crow for as long as they have been in existence, but it doesn't matter, they don't care.

What about the PCs after this long tirade against the crowrate, Mr. Speaker? Why, all of a sudden they are in favour. Now all of a sudden, it's the holy crow. No wonder, we say to the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, you'd better know who your enemies are because your future depends on knowing who those enemies are and what those people will do, should they, God forbid, ever be elected to the government of this province. What they say is what they are, and that's what you can expect to happen to the crowrate and to the economy of this province, Mr. Speaker, and that's what the people of this country can expect.

Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a privilege to stand in this House along with all these other members of this New Democratic Party who have consistently stood behind the crowrate and who have consistently defended the crowrate. By defending the crowrate, Mr. Speaker, this New Democratic Party has stood up for the defence of the farm people. It has also, by defending the crowrate, stood up in defence of the small businessman and the worker. They have stood up in defence of the whole western economy. In spite of what the member for Wilkie had to say, everybody in Saskatchewan is affected by the crowrate. It's strange, Mr. Speaker, that in this debate their shame on their stand allows them to leave only one member in this House to stand up for what they believe. Here comes the second one.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a look, too, at the history of the situation — why we're in this situation. Federal governments, both Liberal and Conservative, have run deficit budgets in this country from time immemorial. As far back as I can remember there have been deficit budgets. And now, along with several other reasons that have been rolled into it, the chickens have come home to roost, and the federal government leaders have cut spending, and they have to cut big. And they are going to cut anywhere they can.

As a result of that, Mr. Speaker, the defence of the crowrate had better be a most vigorous defence. If we don't get out and defend vigorously, it's going to go. We must remember the old principle that the wheel that squeaks the loudest is the one that gets the grease, and we had better make sure that we get the grease in this case, because if we don't go out vigorously, it's gone. and our defence of that crowrate, Mr. Speaker, has been a vigorous one.

Again I ask you, who has fought against the crowrate — the Progressive Conservatives and their Devine leader? And who has led the fight for the crow? Mr. Speaker, the New Democratic Party has watched with pride while the Hon. Gordon MacMurchy, the Minister of Agriculture, the member for Last Mountain-Touchwood, has gone up and down this province fighting like a warhorse to defend the people of this province, to

defend the whole western economy. What about the PCs? What did they say today? "Mr. Minister of Agriculture, you shouldn't go out to talk to the farm people; you shouldn't spend the people's money. Don't mobilize those people of Saskatchewan in this fight. Don't do anything until you get inside the House." What can you do to mobilize the people of this province to fight such a thing as this from inside this House? You have to get out and be in touch with the people of this province. And so they castigate the Minister of Agriculture through their leader. Obviously their Devine leader, their out-of-House leader, attacks through their in-House leader. Why not mobilize to fight? Why do they not want us to mobilize the people of Saskatchewan in this fight — not just the farmers, but everyone in Saskatchewan? What is their objection? I can't understand it, Mr. Speaker, unless you stop to examine a few little things.

They really don't want this fight and don't want people mobilized in the fight, because in their heart of hearts they want to see that crowrate go; they have said so in the past. They don't want the people mobilized. Obviously, if they had wanted to retain the crow they would have gone out themselves and taken their own lead among their own people. They would have held their own meetings. If they had wanted to defend the crow they would have set up petitions. They would have set up their own systems. They would have used their own imaginations in defence of this crow. But they have done nothing of the sort. They have done nothing of the sort, Mr. Speaker.

What do they come up with, Mr. Speaker? They come up with a weak, lame, deathbed repentance. "Oh, we're in favour of the crow." At one time the member for Rosetown-Elrose says, "Oh, you have to take your head out of the sand and change the crowrate." But now what does he say? "Oh, I'm 100 per cent in favour of the crowrate." Which do we believe, Mr. Member for Rosetown-Elrose? Which do the people of your constituency believe? The member for Rosetown-Elrose chooses, very conveniently, to forget what he said before. But it is too late to do anything about it now. It is much too late. You should have done it long ago. You should have come out on this attack long ago. any action you take now is simply further proof of your deathbed repentance in this situation.

It was interesting, Mr. Speaker, to watch the members opposite in a weak attempt to link us up with the Liberals. It is strange how the Minister of Education showed the link between the man who ran for the Liberal Party in Saskatoon and their leader opposite. It is interesting to hear a few of the statements, the very, very comparable statements that were made by Grant Devine and the present minister in charge of the wheat board, Mr. Pepin, *Canadian Agriculture Economics*, 1978:

The lower rates on grain may have slowed the process of crop development and reduced the development of the food processing industry in the Prairies.

Mr. Pepin:

The statutory rates may have duly discouraged the crop diversification and agriculture processing in the West.

We could continue to read those comparable statements for hours on end, Mr. Speaker. It is no wonder that the members opposite come into this Chamber ill-prepared to go into debate. They never come prepared anyway. There is always that lack of preparation, a lack of facts, a lack of depth. It showed up more clearly today than it ever has in the past. It shows them up for being the weakest opposition in the history

of this province.

What are the PC MPs doing? They, too, have been quoted today, several times, speaking against it. What are they doing now? Very little. Once in a while they come out and say like the PCs opposite, "Oh yes, we are in favour of the crow." But they too don't really want to defend the crow. So what are they doing to avoid defending the crow? They ring the bells in Ottawa. That's what they are doing, ringing the bells. That is half the point of what they are doing, ringing the bells to avoid having to come out to make their stands during this hot debate on a very important issue in western Canada.

We too object to the omnibus energy bill which is being presented there. But there are other forms of attack. But they are using the bells in this case, the bells in Ottawa, to take the heat off their non-defence of the crow, because their stand is indefensible. While the bells ring, they don't have to defend the crow. Now the federal PCs can pretend to be the great defenders of democracy, but by ringing the bells, we know they don't have to defend the crow.

Much has been said about the proof of the Tories' changeability. In the old days, before the feminist movement, we used to say it was a woman's prerogative to change her mind. Now, it is quite obvious that it is a Tory's prerogative to change his mind. That's for certain. Consistency, the name certainly is not the Progressive Conservative Party!

Prior to coming into politics, the leader, Grant Devine, could come out to make all sorts of statements against the crow. But now it is a whole different story. We can attack all those people who are against the crow. It is easy to change. The member for Thunder Creek says this one is an issue which Grant Devine really knows something about. We don't want the crow. We are ready to fight an election on this one. I wonder why he isn't in on this debate? I just wonder what he would have to say if he did get into it? Giddy-up, whoa, gee, haw, ahead, backwards, any position which is needed to satisfy the people that they're speaking to, that's the position that the Progressive Conservative Party and the Progressive Conservative members will take. Their multistands on the crowrate are evident and obvious proof of their inability to take a stand on anything except to straddle a fence as best they can.

Mr. Speaker, members of this House have dealt with the inconsistency and the folly of the Progressive Conservative Party opposite at great lengths. Only the PCs can do the flip-flops that are so obvious and so evident here today. And the proof of their inconsistency is that only the Progressive Conservative can flip and flop from one party to the other with the ease that a person changes his socks. Liberal to Progressive Conservative, like the member for Thunder Creek and the member for Qu'Appelle; Progressive Conservative to Liberal like Jack Horner from Alberta; Progressive Conservative to Western Canada Concept like Ray Bailey, who still let his name stand for the Progressive Conservatives in Weyburn. Flip flop, oh yes. That's the same type of flip-floppers that you fellows are over there. That's like the rest of you.

But enough of that. Let's look at the economic impact on Saskatchewan that the loss of the crow would bring. Mr. Speaker, I would like to refer you to a place in Saskatchewan called Dinsmore. In talking about Dinsmore, Saskatchewan, I would like to talk about the very minimum change that would come in the crowrate — that's three times the present crow. And what would the loss be to the people of Dinsmore, Saskatchewan? If even three times the crow came in, Mr. Speaker, it would be over \$1 million and 5.1 jobs would be lost. I would like to say, Mr. Speaker, to the member for Rosetown-Elrose, that's the least of what you supported when you stood in this House and said, "Take

your head out of the sand, Government of Saskatchewan, and agree to some changes in that crow.” That’s the least of what you supported.

The town of Drinkwater in the constituency of Thunder Creek — let’s try five times the crow. And the Liberal government and the Progressive Conservatives opposite all agree, as we heard from the member for Wilkie just now, that it’s up for negotiations, so we don’t know where it’s at. Let’s try five times the crow. What is the result to Drinkwater? Over \$700,000 and 3.4 jobs lost. Mr. Speaker, that’s what the member for Thunder Creek supports when he says, “Let’s get rid of the crow; let’s fight an election on that issue.” Close to \$1 million dollars lost from one centre in his own constituency.

But I’d like you to turn to the city of Yorkton, and let’s try 10 times the crow, which is most likely target for the Pepin-Devine plan. That’s the starter — 10 times the crow. and if the variable rates come in to eliminate the lines, it will be more on some of the branch lines. At 10 times the crow, the loss to the city of Yorkton would be \$4 million and 18.4 jobs. Mr. Speaker, that’s what the Progressive Conservative attack on the crowrate would mean to the people of Yorkton, and I tell you, Mr. Speaker, that we will not allow that.

All of Saskatchewan stands to lose, as I said before — everyone. And 20 times the crow is not inconceivable. A government that says it is going to take the statutory guarantee from the farmer and give that statutory guarantee to the CPR is not to be trusted. And so 20 times the crow is not inconceivable. By 1990, that could be. by 1990, that bill could be \$4 billion to the province of Saskatchewan. That’s what your opposition could mean to the people of this province, Progressive Conservative Party: \$4 billion, virtually twice the present budget of the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Grant Devine, that’s what you are supporting. That’s what you have supported. I’m glad that your flip-flops have finally led you to at least verbal support of the crowrate, but I’m afraid that the words of the Progressive Conservatives won’t make much difference to Pepin and his plan. I hope you stand up in this vote, but I’m afraid that your standing up won’t mean much more than the standing that you did in support in voting for the Meewasin Valley authority, because your votes will have exactly the same meaning. Mr. Speaker, \$4 billion out of the province of Saskatchewan — can you imagine the devastation that that would have on the economy of Saskatchewan?

One second more and I’m finished, Mr. Speaker. That’s what you support — negotiating an end to the present agreement. Then what? We don’t know where it goes from there. But the Progressive Conservative party and its out-of-House leaders were ready to give away \$4 billion before they made the great change of heart. They were ready to allow \$4 billion to go out of the pockets of the farm people of Saskatchewan, and hence out of the pockets of all the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

Let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, let me tell the people opposite, that the farmers in the Yorkton area, whether from Kamsack, Canora, Saltcoats or wherever, are waiting to present their judgment to you in the next election. You’ll see what their judgment is too, Mr. Speaker. They will see. But they will also see, Mr. Speaker, the judgment of the people of the cities — the businessmen and the workers are not dumb, Mr. Speaker. Those people know full well what the devastating effect would be of the loss of the crow.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order! It’s 10 o’clock and this House now stands adjourned until 2 p.m. tomorrow.

The Assembly adjourned at 10:03 p.m.