

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**March 19, 1982**

The Assembly met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

**QUESTIONS**

**Crowrate Negotiations**

**MR. LANE:** — I'd like to direct a question to the Premier. It was part of the Prime Minister of Canada's statement last night, in reference to previous negotiations between you and the Prime Minister, that you were able to satisfactorily resolve or come to an agreement on the constitution, that you were able to come to one on the national energy agreement, and he felt that with your relationship you would be able to come to an agreement on negotiating the crow. Would you give the undertaking that there are no secret negotiations between you and the Prime Minister of Canada, between your government and the Government of Canada to renegotiate the crow?

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Yes, I give the undertaking that there have been none and in the highest degree it is unlikely that there will be any.

**MR. LANE:** — I call to the attention of the Premier of this province that you said the same thing basically on the constitution and the national energy agreement, and in fact there were secret negotiations between you and the Deputy Premier in the state of Hawaii at one time on the constitution. How can you expect the people of this province to believe a statement that there are no secret negotiations when the past practice has been in fact to have secret negotiations between your government and the Government of Canada on very sensitive issues?

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, when it comes to whether the people of this province believe me or believe members opposite, I am prepared to take my chances.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — When it comes to whether the people of this province believe me or believe the Conservative leader on what we say about the crowrate, what we have said, and what we're now saying, and who's reliable and who's not reliable, I'll take my chances.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. LANE:** — A question to the Premier. You have already been on public record — on CBC in 1977 — indicating that the crow will have to change. Your position has been made clear that there will have to be changes in the crow. How does that fare with your previous statement that there are no secret negotiations? How does that fare with the past practice of this government to have secret negotiations on politically sensitive issues?

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, we make no apology for having negotiations

with the federal government on appropriate topics. We have not been invited to have any negotiations with it on the crow. Indeed, we and all other provincial governments have been pointedly excluded from all negotiations with respect to the crow. I say again whether or not the people of this province believe us doesn't depend upon what the members opposite say but upon what the people of the province say, and when it comes to whether we are trustworthy or whether members opposite are trustworthy on this issue, we will find out in due course what the people of the province believe.

Mr. Speaker, our point is rather clear on this. The member for Qu'Appelle has put this issue of crow on the basis of whether the public trusts us to represent the interests of Saskatchewan on the crow and I, for my part, believe that's just where I'd like to leave it, whether they believe the Conservative Party and Mr. Devine on this issue, or whether they believe our party and our stand on this issue.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

### **Provincial Income Tax**

**MR. ANDREW:** — My question is to the Minister of Finance. Yesterday you indicated that other than cigarette tax increases there were no increases in your budget. I wonder if you might explain to the Assembly, Mr. Minister, that 46 per cent increase in personal income tax coming into the budget. I don't think the people of Saskatchewan have had a 46 per cent increase in their incomes and there certainly hasn't been that big a growth in employment in the province of Saskatchewan. Can you tell me why and justify a 46 per cent increase in income tax to the people of Saskatchewan?

**HON. MR. TCHORZEWSKI:** — Mr. Speaker, obviously the member for Kindersley has not taken much instruction in accounting. Let me point out that in Saskatchewan in 1982 an income earner of \$20,000 with two children and a spouse would pay \$729 in income tax. In 1981 that income earner paid \$926 in provincial income tax. That's a pretty substantial reduction.

What the member is talking about is the increase in total personal income tax revenues that are coming to the province. The actual increase is 16.5 per cent, because what happens in those estimates is that we put in what our federal government estimates. It collects the tax for us and then it returns it to the province. Because 1981 was an exceptionally good year, we had the highest increase in personal income in Canada in the province of Saskatchewan. The actual increase in total provincial income tax revenues is 16.5 per cent, and the figures are the way they are because of the federal government's re-estimates.

**MR. ANDREW:** — Mr. Minister of Finance, I suggest to you that one of the reasons for the increase in the personal income tax is because you are basically piggybacking with Mr. MacEachen in Ottawa. You are proposing taxation through income averaging annuity taxes be withdrawn. You are benefiting from employee benefits being taxed, and what you are in effect doing, Mr. Minister, is benefiting from Mr. MacEachen's budget.

**HON. MR. TCHORZEWSKI:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure I heard a question. I heard a comment. Yes, the federal government collects the income taxes for all provinces except the province of Quebec. Our taxation system is a percentage of federal tax. Last year our personal income tax rate as a percentage of federal tax was 53 per cent. This year, it's 51 per cent. In 1977 it was 58.5 per cent. As resource revenues have

increased in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, we have provided benefits to the people of Saskatchewan by reducing taxation for the people of Saskatchewan.

**MR. LANE:** — A supplementary. I think we have just had a rather surprising admission from the Minister of Finance — that the Government of Saskatchewan is using the MacEachen budget (the worst in Canada's history with its taxation increases) to increase the level of taxation in this province.

Would you not now be prepared to reconsider your position on the increase in personal income tax and offset the detrimental effect of the MacEachen budget instead of compounding it?

**HON. MR. TCHORZEWSKI:** — Mr. Speaker, in this budget I announced yesterday that there would be a tax saving on the provincial personal income tax of \$57 million in 1982 for Saskatchewan people. The tax revenues we get have nothing to do with piggybacking on the federal budget — not a thing at all. The reason personal income tax revenues are increasing in the province of Saskatchewan is that the province of Saskatchewan is becoming more prosperous and the income level of Saskatchewan people is increasing in a very dramatic way, because of the good management of this government.

### Mill Rate to Fund School Operations

**MR. TAYLOR:** — A question to the Minister of Education. Yesterday, in the budget, Mr. Minister, it was indicated that there would be a 15 per cent per pupil increase for education. Mr. Minister, would you not agree that in light of the pending settlement of 14 per cent with the teachers of this province, as well as the other inflationary costs of administration faced by the school boards in this province, that a substantial increase in the mill rates at the local level is going to be necessary to fund the operation of our schools in Saskatchewan?

**HON. MR. McARTHUR:** — Mr. Speaker, I would not agree with the hon. member's assumptions. Each year the Department of Education receives estimates from school boards about projected increased costs of operation associated with the various factors involved. Certainly, I think the announced budget increase of 15 per cent per student will adequately provide for maintenance of the contributions toward costs that the province has made.

I would also indicate to the hon. member that in addition to this very generous grant, there will be an increase in the property improvement grant which is an offset against property taxation with respect to education. On net, the result of these contributions will be similar to that of the past 10 years: the property taxpayer has been paying a lesser and lesser proportion of education costs. That decline will continue as a result of these budget items.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — A supplementary. We have already had reports from one of the major school boards in Regina that they feel there will be a whopping increase in the mill rate in this city. Would you not agree, Mr. Minister, that your method of attaching that grant on a per pupil basis is really a way of clouding the actual costs of operating schools? And that because of not taking into consideration all the other situations and costs which are imputed in running a school system, there will be an increase?

**HON. MR. McARTHUR:** — Mr. Speaker, it is well-known that the Saskatchewan

foundation grant system works very, very well in terms of taking into account the cost of operation of schools without us maintaining direct budgetary control over school board operations. Our foundation grants system takes fully into account all costs with respect to school operation; no costs are left out of those estimates. They include not only the operating costs of schools; I also point out to the hon. member that we pay over 90 per cent of the capital costs for school construction in this province. Overall, our grant system takes fully into account all aspects of the operation of schools. I would point out to the hon. member that the Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association which represents the trustees of this province, has indicated it is in full and total agreement with that system and believe it is the best in Canada.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would you not agree, Mr. Minister, that your meager increase (you mentioned a property owners' rebate) really comes down to \$3 a month, and that \$3 a month does very little to decrease the costs which the local people are going to have to pay, not only for education but to fund all the other programs at the local level in the province of Saskatchewan? And would you not agree that the government opposite is using a policy of giving with one hand but then taking away with two?

**HON. MR. McARTHUR:** — Mr. Speaker, let me point out to the hon. member that between the grants to schools under our foundation grant system and the property improvement grant, which is a grant to provide relief against the property tax burden for education, we in Saskatchewan cover in excess of 70 per cent of school operational costs through grants. As a result of the increase in grants under the foundation grant and the increase in the property improvement grants, the proportion of costs actually covered by the Government of Saskatchewan will increase this year as compared to last year. We will be covering close to three-quarters of the costs of education through these two grants. There is no other government in Canada, and certainly no Tory government, that comes close to providing that amount of coverage through grants.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

### **Budget Increase to Land Banks**

**MR. SWAN:** — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Agriculture. In yesterday's budget, Mr. Minister, I noticed that you have \$40 million going to the land bank — another opportunity for the government to take over the land of the people of the province of Saskatchewan. You stated that you had \$40 million in capital gains on land bank land held by the Government of Saskatchewan — \$400 million, I'm sorry. Would it be possible that your government is intending really just to farm the farmers in order to keep operating as a government? Is that the purpose of this increase in the land bank area?

**HON. MR. MacMURCHY:** — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the hon. member would repeat his question because I didn't get all of the background. I got the last phrase, but I didn't get all of the background, and I would like to hear that, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SWAN:** — My question to you is this: you have shown in your budget that you are increasing your money for the purchase of land bank land to \$40 million. Last June, you issued a statement that there was \$400 million of capital gains accruing to the government on land bank land that it held at that time. Is it indeed the purpose and intention of your government to farm the farmers and to reap benefits such as that to

the Government of Saskatchewan?

**HON. MR. MacMURCHY:** — Mr. Speaker, in response to the hon. member's question, I can't recall a statement made by me with respect to the capital gain, and I want to check that. That doesn't mean to say I haven't said something with respect to capital gain. I just want to check it to make sure for the hon. member, and I'll be glad to do that. With respect to the \$40 million increase in land bank, indeed it's an increase over the budget provided for land bank in last year's budget. It goes from \$35 million last year to \$40 million this year. I think that's in response to the popularity that the land bank program is having with the farmers of Saskatchewan.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SWAN:** — Supplementary to the minister. There is a need for farmers to sell land to the land bank because you have not provided any assistance to them in other areas that would make it a good, equitable business that they are in. And as they go broke they have to sell to the land bank. Is the minister not concerned with that aspect of farming? Why were there not some benefits put in the budget that would make it possible for farmers to relieve some of those costs? I see that the minister has provided the purple gas for tandem-axle trucks. That's a very minor item, but it is an item that we appreciate. But why, Mr. Minister, were there not items that would indeed have given some break to the farmers to offset some of the other input costs? There is nothing that I can find.

**HON. MR. MacMURCHY:** — Mr. Speaker, I think this government would be glad to put beside any government in this country our policies with respect to agriculture and our support for the farming community. There's no question that the land bank program and the FarmStart program have had significant implications for the farmers of the province of Saskatchewan, particularly in relation to the number of young farmers who are on the land as a result of this effort and as a result of other things as well but certainly as a result of this effort. There's no question about that.

I think the hon. member will recognize the significant programs as they relate to hogs, the significant programs as they relate to beef, and the significant program as it relates to the grain farmer through the purchase of Saskatchewan grain hopper cars. They support all the farm community. I don't think there's any question that this government will stand with any government with respect to agricultural programs. There's no question that the hon. member opposite can criticize (well he should, because there's more to do) but he should support our efforts in this province for farmers.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

### Quality of Drinking Water

**MR. MUIRHEAD:** — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Urban Affairs. This is the fourth year that I have been expressing my concerns in this House about drinking water. The drinking water in Regina, Moose Jaw and intervening towns . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order! We're having some trouble because the ministers are having trouble hearing the questions. I'm having some difficulty too. So when a member is phrasing a question, I wonder if the members could keep the noise down to a minimum, please.

**MR. MUIRHEAD:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, the drinking water in Regina,

Moose Jaw and intervening towns is at a low quality level. There have now been reports that Regina has levels of arsenic in its drinking water. When is this government going to wake up and do something, Mr. Minister? Will you explain why your government insulted the people in Regina, Moose Jaw and area in yesterday's budget? There wasn't one dollar for water improvement. Will you explain that? Not one dollar!

**HON. MR. SMISHEK:** — Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member had read the budget speech he would have noticed that \$17 million is provided in the budget for urban water and sewer systems in the province through the municipal water assistance board. We are providing a 50 per cent increase in the budget this year for water for communities in the case of Regina and Moose Jaw, the hon. member may be aware (I certainly told him last year and I invite him to review *Hansard*) that the Department of Urban Affairs together with the Department of the Environment and the cities of Moose Jaw and Regina, is having a two-phase study done on the water needs in those two communities. Phase one of the study is on the verge of being completed. After that study is completed it is our intention to meet with officials from the cities of Moose Jaw and Regina to discuss the report and recommendations. I think it would be unwise for us to try to pre-empt the report, which is yet to be received. I also assure the hon. member that the quality of water in both Regina and Moose Jaw meets the health standards and the requirements of the Department of the Environment as good quality water.

**MR. MUIRHEAD:** — Supplementary to the minister. This is the fourth year that I have heard nothing but that studies, studies, and studies are being carried out. Are you or are you not, Mr. Minister, going to do something about the quality of drinking water in Regina and Moose Jaw? Are you going to do something besides saying that studies have been made?

**HON. MR. SMISHEK:** — Mr. Speaker, the position that we have taken in terms of water for urban communities is that the province has worked with the communities to provide an adequate supply. In terms of quality, because of the high mineral content that we have in the province, whether it's providing water from wells or from other sources we do have certain peculiar situations to meet in improving the quality. Our approach has been to meet the supply; local communities, by and large, assume responsibility on the quality question. Regina and Moose Jaw have a peculiar situation in that they have initiated the studies in co-operation with the Department of Urban Affairs and the Department of the Environment. I think it would be wrong for us to try to pre-empt the report. I can assure the hon. member that once the report is received we will be giving it serious consideration.

#### **Assistance to Ambulance Service**

**MR. MUIRHEAD:** — A new question to the Minister of Urban Affairs. We, no doubt, have another serious problem in this province that was not dealt with in your budget yesterday. We have the ambulance owners who are going out of business for lack of funds. What are your plans to maintain the ambulance service in Saskatchewan, Mr. Minister?

**HON. MR. SMISHEK:** — Mr. Speaker, in 1978 the government, in co-operation with urban governments and rural governments, developed an approach to providing ambulance services throughout the province. We felt the best way to provide improved services was through local participation. At the present time, Mr. Speaker, there are 99 ambulance boards functioning. They are organized at a local level. We are providing

substantial assistance. When the program started in 1978, \$1 million was spent in the first year to subsidize and assist the ambulance service. In the current year, we estimate the assistance will be \$2.7 million. Yesterday, the Minister of Finance introduced the new budget and we will be helping to finance ambulance services through the revenue-sharing formula. On the average, ambulances will be receiving a 21 per cent increase through assistance to ambulance boards to provide improvements in the ambulance service throughout the province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. MUIRHEAD:** — Supplementary question. Is it your plan to have the ambulance owners go broke and out of business so that your government can take over and own the ambulance service, just as your government has done with other things so many times before?

**HON. MR. SMISHEK:** — Mr. Speaker, I have no control over whether or not a certain ambulance operator or ambulance company may go bankrupt. That's not in our jurisdiction. It is the ambulance boards and ambulance districts that organize the provision of ambulance services. In some cases, ambulance services are through volunteers; in other cases, they are through the hospitals; and, in other cases, through private operators. It's a combination of services. The local boards negotiate the rates, level of service which will be provided. It is not the responsibility of the government to provide the level of service that will be provided.

### **Press Run for Budget**

**MR. COLLVER:** — I can't even hear myself, Mr. Speaker.

My question is to the Minister of Finance. Since there's considerable talk from the press and others that the Government of Saskatchewan and the Premier are going to be calling an immediate election, this is probably the last time I'll be rising in this Assembly. My question to the Minister of Finance is: what was the press run of this particular budgetary document?

**HON. MR. TCHORZEWSKI:** — Mr. Speaker, I guess if the member would put that on the order paper — he doesn't need to because I will take it as notice and find out how many copies were printed. I don't know the number exactly. The reason for the pamphlet is that we get a lot of people who write in and ask about the budget. We send them the information; that's why we have the pamphlet. But I will find out how many copies we got and will let the member know.

### **Tabling Document**

**MR. BERNTSON:** — A question to the Premier. Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, in question period I indicated to the Premier that I would provide him with a copy of a document. I'll send it over to him now. It deals with water slides, wave-tech pools, and things like that.

I also have, Mr. Premier, . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, order! The member has been saying clearly himself the last two days that you can't table stuff during the question period. Order, order! Now all I've heard is that he is putting a document on the Table, and the member . . . Order, order!

The member has been taking time not to ask questions but to deal with a document. If he has a question, I'd be very pleased to accept it.

**MR. BERNTSON:** — My question, Mr. Speaker, is: in light of the document that just landed in the Premier's hands, and in light of the fact that I have another truckload of them here, and in light of the fact that in yesterday's question period it was obvious to anyone who was watching that you have a bloody sieve on your hands, and in light of the fact that two years ago you promised to this House that you were going to tighten up security around here, will you indicate to this House what you are doing to tighten it up?

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, order!

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, I would, in a sense, rather have a sieve in the public service than a sieve in the brain.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — I pick up the *Hansard* from Wednesday and I note that the member for Souris-Cannington says:

. . . if it satisfies the Premier, I'll be more than pleased to deliver to his office, after question period today, a copy of the government priorities in the parks and development branch . . .

I was watching in my office and it hasn't come to the office yet.

I haven't had an opportunity to look at the material that the hon. member provides. I think it is rather clear, though, from a very, very quick look at it that it's not something that the cabinet has ever dealt with, certainly. It is not cabinet material. I don't think it's treasury board material . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . It appears to be something that was prepared in a department. Fair enough.

We have 10,000 employees who prepare material. The great bulk of it is in no sense private. There is no point in putting in a great security system to keep junior employees from distributing material. When it gets to the ministerial level and cabinet level, on which decisions may be made, clearly then steps should be taken. But I think the hon. members would be the first to protest if we put in a system which attempted to guarantee against the distribution of material which was being prepared by relatively junior employees for the consideration of senior employees, who may in due course recommend it to the minister, who may in due course recommend it to the treasury board, which may in due course recommend it to cabinet. At some point you have to say that at one of those levels, four or five cuts down, there is no point in attempting to put in a security system and we don't propose to do so.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

## **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

### **Bill No. 33 — An Act respecting Building and Accessibility Standards and the Inspection of Buildings**

**HON. MR. SNYDER:** — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a bill respecting building and



accessibility standards and the inspection of buildings.

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

**Bill No. 34 — An Act to amend The Superannuation (Supplementary Provisions) Act**

**HON. MR. ROBBINS:** —I move first reading of a bill to amend The Superannuation (Supplementary Provisions) Act.

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

**Bill No. 35 — An Act to amend The Workers' Compensation Act, 1979**

**HON. MR. SNYDER:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that a bill to amend The Workers' Compensation Act, 1979, be now introduced and read a first time.

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

**MOTION**

**Referral of Estimates to Standing Committee on Estimates**

**HON. MR. ROMANOW:** — I'd like to move, before orders of the day, by leave, seconded by the hon. member for Last Mountain-Touchwood, the Minister of Agriculture:

That the estimates and supplementary estimates for the Legislative Assembly, subvotes 1 to 3, 6 to 7, 17, and 20 to 23 of vote 21 be withdrawn from the committee of finance and referred to the standing committee on estimates.

This is in conjunction with the board of internal economy's recommendations that these votes relating to the Speaker's office and the like be dealt with by the standing committee on estimates.

Leave granted.

Motion agreed to.

**GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

**Reappointment of the Ombudsman**

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, this motion is one for the reappointment of the ombudsman. I will just take a moment. Members will recall that we introduced a bill to establish the office of ombudsman in the 1972 session. The ombudsman was appointed in 1973; at that time Judge Ernest Boychuk was appointed. He assumed his duties on the bench in 1977. In April of 1977 the current ombudsman, Mr. Tickell, was appointed.

The relevant legislation provides that:

Unless he sooner resigns, dies, or is removed from office, the ombudsman shall hold office for a term of five years from the date of his appointment and

may be reappointed for one additional term of five years.

Accordingly, Mr. Tickell's appointment expires next month. It is the view of the government that Mr. Tickell should be reappointed for the further term. My colleague, the Attorney General, has had an opportunity to consult with the Leader of the Opposition. It is my understanding that this motion will not be opposed by the official opposition. I do not think we need to enter a long debate on this. The office of ombudsman has, I think, served us well, and accordingly ought to be continued. Mr. Tickell has discharged his duties in a creditable manner and in our judgment he should be reappointed to carry on for the further five-year term.

In order to facilitate this and in order to get the resolution which is required by the legislation passed so that there may be no hiatus next month, I will move, seconded by the Hon. Mr. Romanow:

That a humble address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor recommending that David Arthur Tickell of the city of Regina, in the province of Saskatchewan, be reappointed ombudsman under section 3 of The Ombudsman Act, being chapter 0-4 of the Revised Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1978.

Mr. Speaker, I call your attention to the fact that on the blues we had "be appointed" when it might well properly have been said "reappointed," and the motion says, "reappointed." It makes no change in the sense of what will be accomplished by the motion. In order to accomplish, Mr. Speaker, I so move.

Motion agreed to.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

### ADJOURNED DEBATES

#### Crow's Nest Rate

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. MacMurchy:

That this Assembly, recognizing the grave social and economic implications of the federal government's attack on the crowrate, rejects the federal government's plan to abolish the statutory crowrate and replace it with a law designed to protect the railroads, and affirms the commitment of this legislature to the crowrate with its fundamental principles of a fixed rate for producers and equal rates for equal distance.

**MR. BANDA:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When I adjourned the debate two days ago, I was attempting to point out to the members of the House the lack of credibility and of effort put forth by members opposite. The member for Qu'Appelle this morning raised a very important matter in this regard when he talked about reliability.

Mr. Speaker, I've had time, since I adjourned the debate, to take a look at what members were saying. I read *Hansard* and the member for Arm River. The speaker was making a plea to members on this side of the House, and I'll read what he said on page 641, March 17, in *Hansard*:

Mr. Speaker, I'm ashamed of anyone over there opposite who tries to put in my mind and in my heart what I am saying. When you people over there stand up and say you believe in statutory rates and saving the crow. I believe you. And I think you should have the integrity to believe us.

Mr. Speaker, there's nothing wrong with that. It's a very important plea. What I'm trying to point out is: how can we believe members opposite when they continually contradict themselves? Just to illustrate, Mr. Speaker, I looked at *Hansard* when the hon. member for Souris-Cannington was speaking, and on page 515 of *Hansard*, March 15, this is what he said. I quote:

But the interesting one is the quote you credit to my colleague, the member for Rosetown-Elrose. December 3, 1980, you credit a quote to my colleague, the member for Rosetown-Elrose. What were they talking about in *Hansard* that day? Everything but crow. You can look that page up, down and sideways and you won't find the member for Rosetown-Elrose quoted there anyplace.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I happen to have the book here. *Debates and Proceedings*, volume 23, 1980-81, and I look on pages 142 and 143. It's under the member, Mr. Swan, and I presume that is the member for Rosetown-Elrose. I quote:

The Minister of Agriculture in Saskatchewan is still saying, "No change in the crowrate." Perhaps that's a good stand, but I wonder if it is a realistic stand . . . this is the policy that the Conservative government in Ottawa put forward during its short term in office. There was a need for some changes . . .

Now, Mr. Speaker, where is the reliability in what members over there say. How can we believe them under these circumstances? I think the hon. member for Arm River should talk to his colleagues before he pleads with us to believe what they are saying on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I have been very disappointed in the lack of preparation and research, the lack of vigor and enthusiasm put forth by members opposite for something meaningful and constructive in regard to this whole crowrate and Pepin proposal. It is regrettable, Mr. Speaker. In fact, members opposite, when they got up to speak, between fidgeting and talking about everything else from land bank to FarmStart and interest rates, didn't talk about the crow.

They demonstrate to me, Mr. Speaker, that they put their fingers up in the wind and somehow got the feeling that maybe in the days ahead there will be an election and they had better say that they support the crow. That's about the extent of their research on this. They are very embarrassed to come out and tell the public the truth, because of the stance that their leader and their colleagues in other provinces have taken on this whole issue of the Pepin plan.

Mr. Speaker, I read in the *Star Phoenix* of Thursday, March 11, 1982, about the PC leader, Professor Devine, saying that the NDP has, and I quote:

. . . flip flopped on the issue while his party has remained firmly committed to the retention of the controversial statute.

Now, Mr. Speaker, who is this issue so controversial for? It's not controversial for members on this side of the House; it's not controversial for the majority of farmers in Saskatchewan; it's not controversial for the federal NDP or the Manitoba NDP. Mr. Speaker, I can see that it's controversial for the provincial PCs, for the federal PCs, for the Alberta PCs, and for the former PC government of Manitoba. It's controversial for the Cargills and the railroads and Palliser and Pepin and the Liberals.

But why, Mr. Speaker, is it controversial? Well, I say it's controversial because they have never believed in the crow, and their counterparts in all areas of this country have never believed in it and have advocated change for the railroads and their friends with the money.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues have used many quotes from members opposite and their leader and from MPs across this country, and I don't want to repeat them (although sometimes it is useful to do that).

Our agriculture caucus has spent the last two or three weeks researching all aspects of the proposal to change the crow, and we have some 10 pages (just for your information) of quotes to back up our comments of members opposite and their leader on this whole issue. I have some quotes here, Mr. Speaker, that I just picked up last night, which I think are interesting. I'm quoting here from the *Herald*. Lorne Zacharias wrote this, and it says:

"Alberta Minister Praises the Rate Move." The Federal government drew praise from an Alberta cabinet minister on Monday for moving to change the 84-year-old Crow's Nest Pass rate for shipping grain by rail. "I'm pleased to see they have made a move," Agriculture Minister Dallas Schmidt told reporters Monday.

Now, here's an agricultural minister who is pleased with the route the federal government is talking. Mr. Speaker, where is the reliability? Where is the credibility? That's not the only one. I have another one. This is from the *Edmonton Sun* dated February 10, 1982.

"Tories Crow Over Rates." The Alberta Tories had something to crow about yesterday. They actually liked federal Transport Minister Jean-Luc Pepin's plan to pluck the Crow's Nest Pass freight rates.

Mr. Speaker, again, these are proposals to do away with the crow. I am not finished yet, Mr. Speaker. Here is another one from Edmonton dated February 2, 1982.

"Alberta Ministers Welcome Crow Study." Agricultural Minister Dallas Schmidt and Hugh Planche, Minister of Economic Development, agreed in a statement that the federal government is assuming its responsibility by changing the rates.

Mr. Speaker, do you mean to tell me that a Conservative Party in Saskatchewan is different from Conservative ministers in Alberta? I don't believe that, Mr. Speaker. I don't believe that.

Mr. Speaker, if Professor Devine says he was a researcher when he wrote the paper and

not a politician, then I suppose I would accept his credibility if he also researched the side of the crow that favours it. But where are Mr. Devine's professional papers in support of the crow? Where are his representations to the federal government in support of the crow? Where are his retractions of the attacks made on the crow by provincial Tory MLAs, Mr. Speaker? Federal Conservatives also oppose the crow. Where are his statements to federal Conservatives in support of the crow? It is abundantly clear that this leader is a long-time opponent of the crow. There is no question about that. As leader of the party in Saskatchewan, he is now projecting himself as one of those opponents battling to save the crow. Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan will not be fooled by this political chicanery.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BANDA:** — Why, Mr. Speaker, would a Tory MP have stated in the *Western Producer* on February 25, 1982, the following? I quote again, Mr. Speaker. I ask members to listen to this.

However, one western PC member of parliament who favours change says the varying public positions reflect the political reality of the day. The MP, who asked not to be identified, said, "Saskatchewan MPs are defending the crow in an attempt to minimize the damage to the Saskatchewan PC Party. If Allan Blakeney fights an election on the issue, if we can keep our heads down until the election in Saskatchewan, things will change and we will be able to come out more honest."

Mr. Speaker, I don't know who the member was. I would hope it wasn't the member of parliament for Kindersley, but I don't know. Or maybe it was the MLA for Moosomin. As I understand it, he gets misquoted in the *Western Producer* once in a while, but I'm not sure. Anyway, they are going to keep their heads down, Mr. Speaker. It seems to me members opposite are keeping their heads down because their true stand will affect them if an election were called on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, what have members opposite been doing with their research monies? What have they done to present a strong case in defence of the crow besides condemn our agricultural minister on what they called a road show? Mr. Speaker, our members have always been committed to the crowrate for transportation and that's the difference. Our members are committed to it. Our members believe in it. Our Minister of Agriculture has shown leadership, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BANDA:** — Mr. Speaker, we're at the crossroads in the history of our nation and it is upon the outcome of this battle that the future shape of rural Saskatchewan will depend. That's what this debate is all about. The research that we, as caucus committee, have done on the effects of the proposed Pepin plan are staggering. These facts and figures that we've used don't take into consideration the effects of variable rates and inflation costs. They simply look at the proposed increased rates if the crow goes. We take five times crow, for example. Some of my colleagues have used some of these figures in their constituencies. Five times crow is less than Mr. Snavelly has stated is needed by the railroads.

Let's look at the effect on two communities in my constituency. Let's look at Blaine Lake, Mr. Speaker. It's a town with a population of 670. The farmers under the crowrate paid

\$123,888 last year to ship their grain. That was for transportation costs. At five times crow, their lost income for that shipping point alone would increase to \$495,555. That small community would lose over \$257,000 in investment due to this increase. It would also lose retail sales in the amount of over \$188,000. The community economic loss would amount to over \$446,000. Mr. Speaker, that's over \$1.3 million lost to a community of 670 people.

Let's look at a smaller community. Let's look at Maymont with a population of approximately 300. The cost of shipping grain last year out of that point was \$120,249. At five times the crowrate the lost farm income would be over \$480,000. Lost investment would be over \$250,000. Lost retail sales would be over \$182,000. The economic loss for Maymont would be \$432,000 for a total loss of revenue in that small town of \$1.346 million. I say, Mr. Speaker, that would be a disaster for the way of life which we in Saskatchewan are so proud of.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BANDA:** — Mr. Speaker, members may say (as some have done) that it will never be five times crow. I say that it's quite likely it's going to be more than that. This morning I obtained a clipping from *The Country Guide* called "A Railroad Revolution." It was written by Dave Wreford. I'm going to quote from this:

Changes in Canada's western grain freight rates are in the wind. It's not likely de-regulation, if it occurs at all, will even approach what has happened recently in the U.S. but here's a look at how grain handling and transportation south of the border is being turned upside down by changes in the rail freight rate structure.

To a considerable degree these changes are due to a piece of U.S. legislation known as the Staggers Rail Act of 1980 that essentially de-regulated the railroad business. Under the previous structure of highly regulated freight rates so many railroads were going bankrupt that the Carter administration and Congress decided on a sink-or-swim policy.

The railroads can also make surcharges on traffic originating or terminating on light density lines and they're doing it. The surcharges are ranging up to \$1,000 per car. All of a sudden trucking to inland terminals looks much more attractive and the future of many small elevators and branch lines is in grave doubt.

Mr. Speaker, it would be interesting for members to get a copy of this and read it all. I don't have time to go through it all. I want to quote from another paragraph. I want to illustrate what will happen to Saskatchewan if the Pepin plan goes through.

From Whitetail, Montana, for example, it costs \$2.19 per hundred weight (that's about \$1.30 per bushel) to rail wheat to the Portland and Puget Sound areas. That's a single car rate. The cost drops to \$2.202 per hundred weight for a 26-car lot accumulated from no more than four country points and shipped to one export location. The same lot costs \$1.97 from one country point to one export location. A 52-car lot costs \$1.82 from one country point to one export terminal.

Mr. Speaker, what does that say? That says that the whole proposal that Pepin has put

out would lead us to inland terminals, fewer shipping points and higher costs. There is no question about that, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan has a proud heritage and tradition in the rural community; that's what this is all about.

Where can we find a better social life than in this kind of an atmosphere? When someone passes away in our small communities everyone knows about it. They all come to comfort the family. They all pitch in to provide help and support in a time of stress. When a town or village builds a hall or a rink or a church, all the community pitches in to donate, canvass, plan, and work. When there is a wedding everyone turns out to celebrate, to congratulate, and support the new couple. If a farmer loses his barn or farm home, or if he gets sick or is injured during harvest or seeding, all the community comes to help get the job done. Do we want to destroy this way of life? That's what this proposal is all about, Mr. Speaker. I'm not prepared to accept that and my colleagues in this Legislature are not prepared to accept that.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BANDA:** — Mr. Speaker, if the CPR doesn't like hauling grain at 1897 rates and maintaining its railways, then let them give us back its resource booty of 1897. The net profit value of CP's oil and gas reserves increased \$690 million in the last year. And that is according to their own annual report. I say instead of pouring more money down the bottomless sinkhole of the CP corporate empire, the taxpayer should nationalize CP Ltd. and integrate it with the CN to build a modern rail system.

The taxpayers must take equity ownership for what they paid for. We paid for building the CPR in the first place, but did we get a plugged nickel for ownership? No way. The government should take equity for public investment urgently needed for upgrading the railroad system. Public investment in the railroad system would pay for itself in increased exports, lower unemployment, and greater economic activity.

Changing the crowrate is not a comprehensive solution to financing western rail expansion because grain will only be about 14 per cent of the traffic by 1990. The rail lines have to be expanded primarily for coal which, according to estimates, will move at more than triple the volume in the next 10 years. The railways are stalling expansion so they can rook farmers and the treasury to pay for coal transportation, Mr. Speaker, and I question that, particularly when Fording Coal, owned by CP, is hoarding coal and sitting on 2 billion tons of coal. Where is the justice in this proposal when they want to load that cost on the backs of the people of Saskatchewan?

Mr. Speaker, in any debate we on this side of the House have always provided leadership and we are providing leadership in this fight in another way as well. It's not good enough to just be against something, even if it is the change in the crow. We have a better solution. There is an alternative which we can provide to protect the family farm and rural Saskatchewan, as we know it, for the future. It is an alternative which would also provide Canada with a modern rail system to move grain from landlocked prairies to port. We call this alternative to the Pepin plan "the Saskatchewan solution."

It contains a commitment to the crowrate with its fundamental principles, a guaranteed rate for producers and equal rates for equal distance. It includes the acceptance of the fact that an increase in rail line capacity in the western rail system does not require the death of the crowrate. It requires the acceptance by the federal government of its responsibilities which will provide a transportation system which will move grain and other bulk commodities to export markets. Mr. Speaker, it contains a commitment from

the federal and provincial governments to make the necessary improvements to the rail system whether they be in mainline capacity, branch line rehabilitation or equipment replacement. It also contains acceptance of the principle that public equity investments should ultimately lead to a total public utility rail system where the only goal would be to increase Canadian exports, not fatten the pocketbooks of corporate shareholders.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan government has already put these principles into practice with the purchase of 1,000 hopper cars. The cars are being used by the railroads, free of charge, to move grain within the western divisions. In the 1981 crop year, those cars moved 8 million bushels of grain to export position. We bought the hopper cars for two reasons. First, we bought the cars to add to the grain handling and transportation system capacity, and the cars will certainly do that. Secondly, we bought the cars to assist the Canadian Wheat Board in meeting its export opportunities.

It may be valuable to outline the agreement that has been arrived at with two rail companies and the Canadian Wheat Board for the operation of their Saskatchewan cars. That agreement is a tough one, but it is a clear and generous agreement. It's an agreement that's not just of benefit to the farm producers of Saskatchewan for whom we bought the cars, but to the producers of Saskatchewan and Manitoba. All producers are treated the same. The Saskatchewan agreement provides for control of the hopper cars by the Canadian Wheat Board. The cars are for the movement of statutory grain and will be provided to the railroads at no less fee for movement of this grain within the western division. They may be used for statutory grain movement to export position through eastern Canada, but this will be done only by permission of the board and upon payment of a rental fee. Other statutory grain products or other grain may be moved in the cars with permission. If the cars are in excess of what is needed for grain movement, arrangements may be made to make the cars available for potash. I want to point out here that those cars are lined and can be used for potash if need be. The cars will be maintained by the railroads at no charge, and the work will be undertaken in Saskatchewan wherever possible.

Mr. Speaker, the agreement is a five-year agreement, but provides for termination of the agreement if the wheat board loses control of the block shipping system or if, by any action of the federal government, control of quotas is removed from the board. The agreement also provides for termination upon 90 days notice should there be a change in the crowrate. That's important because it shows the leadership and the foresight this government had in putting this kind of a commitment in that agreement. Mr. Speaker, no other province has that. If that agreement should terminate, the railroads would not be given the right of first refusal to purchase the cars as is provided in the Government of Canada agreement. The cars were purchased by Saskatchewan for prairie producers and ownership will be retained in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, because we have this agreement, we don't see our cars standing on sidings because they were moved without authority. We don't see any challenges in the courts related to our cars. We have shown that leadership and commitment to farmers and the crowrate.

Canada needs a modern railway system. Our future as an exporting nation depends on it. It is in the national interest to build the best possible system to move bulk commodities of all kinds, including grain to port. Mr. Speaker, the railways hold a powerful monopoly position over the movement of grain to port from Canada's landlocked prairies. What is needed is a national transportation policy which looks



beyond the interest of the railway companies, and which recognizes that the crucial question is not whether the CPR can afford the crowrate but whether Canada can any longer afford the CPR, Mr. Speaker.

I suppose that it all boils down to this question: who will best defend the crowrate for the people of Saskatchewan? Who would you rather have fighting the Pepin plan in your name, Mr. Speaker — our Premier, our agriculture minister and our Attorney General, or Dr. Devine, the member for Moosomin and the member for Thunder Creek? Who can best defend Saskatchewan's interests? Whom can we trust, Mr. Speaker? I say we can trust Allan Blakeney, Gordon MacMurchy, and Roy Romanow.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BANDA:** — Mr. Speaker, it's funny. As soon as we start to talk about trust they get a little upset over there. I wonder why.

On the crowrate the Tories are really telling the people of Saskatchewan to take a chance on them. They are saying that they've never supported the crowrate in the past. In fact, they say that their leaders have often spoken out against it and belittled the family farms which the crowrate protects. But now they've seen the light, Mr. Speaker. All of a sudden they are true believers. That's what the Tories are asking the people to believe, Mr. Speaker. But is this Tory conversion for real? Are the Tories to be believed on the crow? When you think about it, the Tories are asking the people of Saskatchewan to take a chance on the crow — to gamble with their future. Mr. Speaker, that's a gamble that the people of Saskatchewan don't have to take.

Mr. Speaker, the leadership team that will fight and defeat the Pepin plan has already started the battle on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan. The leadership team is Allan Blakeney, Gordon MacMurchy and Roy Romanow. They are fighting that battle with the support of every single member on this side of the House, and I'm proud to support the motion.

**HON. MR. ROBBINS:** — If the mouth from Moosomin will close down for a little while, I'll start. Mr. Speaker, I take some pleasure in entering the debate on the crowrate resolution. Dr. Devine, the Leader of the Opposition in absentia, says that he does not think Premier Blakeney understands Saskatchewan agriculture. I'm quoting from the February 16 issue of the *Leader-Post*, which carried an article written by Dale Eisler wherein he quotes Dr. Devine as saying:

Well, I'll put my agricultural credentials up against Mr. Blakeney's any day, whether it's his quota book versus my quota book or his degrees in agriculture versus mine or his farm versus mine.

Mr. Speaker, that is really a fatuous comment designed to appeal to one thing only — emotionalism. I recall very vividly, in days gone by, when Premier T. C. Douglas was in power in the province of Saskatchewan, opposition members telling him and his government that they knew nothing about agriculture. And Tommy's quip was, "I never laid an egg either, but I know more about an omelette than a hen does."

We are dealing when discussing the crowrate with one of the basics of the confederation package and the constitution of this country. This was and is a deal for western Canada related to a deal for central Canada in the form of a tariff structure. It

enables manufacturers, distributors, and factory agents to achieve a measure of protection against foreign competition.

The members of this House, Mr. Speaker, should be aware that western Canadian agriculture is a basic Canadian industry. It is not a branch-camp offspring of a multinational foreign-controlled industry draining money out of this country. Mr. Speaker, the agricultural community and the agricultural industry competes on world markets without any tariff protection in relation to agricultural producers of other nations. Many of those foreign producers have lower input costs, and have subsidies paid by their respective governments supplied in relation to their cost of production. In many instances, these competing foreign producers have much shorter distances to transport the competing product to market. Australia and Argentina are two prime examples of this. Our western Canadian agricultural industry pays appreciably higher costs simply because, under the confederation arrangement, the Canadian people have chosen, through the federal authority, to protect those other industries.

One should ask oneself, Mr. Speaker, why the Canadian agricultural producer should suffer potential loss of his basic protection through any tampering with the crowrate. It can be readily demonstrated that the crowrate is the only concession possessed by western grain producers in that confederation arrangement. The agricultural producer has no assurance that he can sell into a captive market as is true of Canadian producers of manufactured goods.

Mr. Speaker, it is totally irrational to expect the grain producer to operate completely at the mercy of market forces. No other Canadian industry does so, and we should ask ourselves why the agricultural industry should do so. Increasing freight rates, simply stated, means lower net farm incomes. What are the implications of this move? Lower farm income will result in reduced spin-off effects in the economy and such an impact can be devastating in an area which is predominantly agricultural.

There are some fascinating facts, Mr. Speaker, revealed with a bit of research and analysis. The Canadian Pacific empire is an interesting one. It permeates the economic structure and the fabric of the entire Canadian industrial scene. Let's look at some of the facets of that commercial enterprise. Cominco Ltd. is a subsidiary of the CPR. That subsidiary, in its last fiscal year, paid a quarterly dividend of 80 cents per share. Canadian Pacific Enterprises holds 54 per cent of the 18,795,018 outstanding shares of Cominco. That represented a cash transfer of \$40 million to CPR in its last fiscal year. PanCanadian Petroleum is generating profits of \$200 million a year into the coffers of the CPR.

Where does it secure the rights for these mining interests and oil producing lands? Mr. Speaker, it received them from Canadian taxpayers as a part of the bargain on the commitment to transport grain in perpetuity at the crowrate. Now they wish to abolish the crowrate. Do they also offer to reimburse the Canadian taxpayer by returning land and mineral rights to the public authority? They do not. But why should they not do so if they intend to alter the crowrate side of the bargain. Obviously it was a bargain and should be retained on that basis.

Mr. Speaker, the Pepin proposal also has many far-reaching and often unsuspecting political ramifications. John Turner, a prominent Toronto lawyer and a finance minister in the mid-1970s in the Trudeau federal administration, is a member of the Canadian Pacific board of directors. Paul Desmarais as chairman of the Power Corporation of Canada, a conglomerate of prodigious proportions, has a dominating control role in

the Canadian Pacific enterprise. One of CP's subsidiaries is Fording Coal, mentioned by the previous speaker, a holder of vast coal reserves in southern British Columbia. Since it is reasonably clear, Mr. Speaker, that a large proportion of the increased tonnage of freight to be transported in the '80s and the '90s is made up of coal as well as other commodities in addition to grain, the implications of this connection should not be ignored. Mr. Desmarais is a close friend of Prime Minister Trudeau and one of the leading members of the Liberal Party in Montreal. It is also interesting to note that Mr. A. M. Runciman, recently retired as president of United Grain Growers, is a Canadian Pacific director serving on their board. Should one not call into question UGG's stand on the crowrate controversy? It is not an unfair question.

We are repeatedly told that unless the railways are relieved of their grain shipping losses, it is impossible for them to expand and improve their transportation services. Mr. Speaker, advocates of the removal of the crowrate contend it prevents processing into finished products of the raw materials of western agricultural production, because they say the raw materials can be so cheaply transferred out of the West to other areas of the country for processing.

Mr. Speaker, it should be readily understood that the rail transportation industry is a highly profitable enterprise, despite the admitted losses in relation to grain shipments at the crowrate. Grain shipments in relation to the total tonnage of rail freight volume are relatively small, in the range of some 15 to 20 per cent, and likely should diminish in relation to increasing future rail tonnage transport of other commodities such as coal, potash, and others.

Mr. Speaker, it should never be forgotten that the Canadian Pacific complex achieves rail system surpluses despite losses incurred on grain shipments and, through its subsidiaries, heavily subsidized by the Canadian taxpayer, achieved net profits of \$580 million and \$486 million in its last two fiscal years. To conclude that it will not expand its transportation facilities and services to hold its share of expanding transport of commodities such as coal, potash, sulphur and newsprint is to be totally unrealistic and economically naïve. To argue that the crowrate is a hindrance to processing of raw agricultural material into finished goods in western Canada is simply to lose touch with reality. One could hardly anticipate relocation of eastern commercial enterprises to new locations west of the Lakehead after removal or emasculation of the crowrate occurs.

The prairie region possesses rather unique production capabilities. Our climate is conducive to large surpluses of high quality wheat and feed grains. The milling quality of our wheat is unsurpassed anywhere in the world. Generally it is sought after to be utilized through the mixing process with lower-quality domestically produced bread wheats in countries importing from Canada. The crowrate factor is of major importance in retaining market probabilities throughout the world grain trade for the grain production on the Prairies.

Mr. Speaker, a number of royal commissions have been initiated over the years in relation to rail transportation in western Canada. All of those commissions, including the most recent Hall Commission, concluded that the crowrate should be retained because of its importance to the nation's economy. How could they arrive at any other conclusion, Mr. Speaker, when it adds some \$5 billion a year to our international export trade? It should be obvious to anyone that it is a major factor in relation to our international balance of payments position.

The federal authority has now appointed Mr. Clay Gilson, a noted agricultural economist, as the chief negotiator in relation to the crowrate proposals of the Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin. Who is he? Well, Mr. Speaker, he was a member of the task force which produced a report, "Canadian Agriculture in the '70s." It was this report which was instrumental in laying the ground work for the LIFT program introduced in 1971. I believe a better terminology for the LIFT program than lower inventories for tomorrow is Liberals in for trouble. History has proven that terminology to be correct.

I have no particular biases against economists, agricultural or otherwise, with the possible exception of one particular Saskatchewan-based specimen which I defeated in Saskatoon Nutana in the 1978 general election. I have no intention of providing quotes from that gentleman at this particular time. However, Mr. Speaker, I would point out that my roots in the agricultural sector of this province are deep and extend over a long period of time. My father homesteaded in Saskatchewan at the time of the formation of the province. Our farm has been in our family for more than 77 years. My father, my eldest brother, my nephew, and my son have in turn occupied that farm over a period of time.

Mr. Speaker, I will match our farm against a certain unnamed agricultural economist's farm. I will match my quota book against his quota book. I will match the university training in my family against the agricultural university training in his family. I will match our farm experience against his farm experience any day of the week.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. ROBBINS:** — My family has deep roots in the co-operative and credit union movements, in the formation and continuation of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, and in the political movements of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation and its successor, the New Democratic Party. All of that family experience, work and dedication to the rural lifestyle of Saskatchewan reacts unfavourably to a proposal to tamper with the one basic protection which the confederation agreement gave to the western agricultural producer — the crowrate. I am strongly supportive of the resolution supporting retention of the crowrate for prairie grain on the non-variable basis of equal rate for equal distance guaranteed in statute. Obviously, Mr. Speaker, I will vote in favour of the resolution.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. TAYLOR:** — Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure to rise for a few brief moments on this important topic of the crowrate. I will attempt to be brief and to the point in my remarks. I don't think there is any great necessity to rise and go on with long prepared canned speeches. I think people expect their elected representatives to put forth their ideas in a succinct and brief manner, and that's what I will attempt to do in discussing this topic of the crow.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest yesterday to the budget speech and I saw that there was rather a dearth of improvements or programs for agriculture. However, I must say that this legislature, and especially the fellows across the way, have not forgotten agriculture in entirety. There has been quite an animal show and a bit of animal husbandry taking place in the province.

As I look around and watch the activities of the last while — what has become known as the MacMurchy touring road show; the Pepin demonstrations and talks out here in

Saskatchewan; the speeches that I have listened to over the last week in the legislature; the quotes and misquotes and accusations and background which goes back into the 1890s, into the historical background, rather than dealing with the situation today of the crowrate and its importance to Saskatchewan — I realize that maybe agriculture hasn't really been forgotten. Mr. Speaker, I feel and many other people in Saskatchewan feel that there have been an awful number of turkeys running around putting forth a great deal of bull about an innocent little crow. And I think that is the animal husbandry that has been focused on by the government opposite.

And for what purpose, Mr. Speaker? For what purpose? For the purpose of political posturing because of an impending election and for no other purpose than that. That is why we see speaker after speaker standing up on the other side, going on and on trying to let on that they are the real saviors of the crow when the people of Saskatchewan know very well that is not the case. I tell you that the fancy pamphlets you sent out with glossy pages are doing you more harm than good. The people of Saskatchewan see through the charade of the government opposite, Mr. Speaker. They will not be fooled this time.

I say if you are really sincere, the crowrate, if it is to be changed, will be changed by the Government of Canada in Ottawa. I echo the words of my colleague for Arm River when he said, "Why not use these monies and these resources to send an elected minister and the Premier down to the government in Ottawa." That is where the fight should take place and that is where you should make your position known instead of politically posturing around the boondocks of Saskatchewan. Let me tell you, there isn't one person, there isn't one farmer in this province that wants to see that crowrate changed. And they don't need convincing. They don't need a touring road show to tell them that the crowrate shouldn't go. They know very well the crowrate shouldn't go and they expect the government in power in this province to do its job and go down there and talk to Mr. Whelan and talk to Mr. Pepin and talk to Mr. Trudeau. And that's what you should be doing as the elected government of this province.

Mr. Speaker, I will say at this time that if you screw up your courage and go to the polls then when you are defeated you will see that the party from over here will be over there as the government and will do exactly what I am saying. We will take the fight to the man where the fight should be rather than scouting around the province trying to drum up support for a badly hurting government.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I have been waiting and wondering when I should speak on the crow; there are always some auspicious signs that come about. And today, as I happened to be driving in, I saw my first three crows. Do you know where I saw them? I saw them in Wascana. And you know what thought came to me? I have seen a lot of crows in the last while. I have seen a crow tied to the railroad track with the train coming at it; I have seen people shooting at the crow; I have seen members with a crow in their lapel. And oh, there was a pamphlet with a crow on it. You know there's been crow, crow, crow. And then I saw these three and I thought, "You know something Graham? By golly, they are taking the geese out of Wascana and their provincial bird is going to be the crow." That's the end that you would go to, you fellows. It just made me think that that's what is going to happen.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I think when we look at this situation of crowrate, we have to realize that in this Canadian context the maintenance of the crow is of extreme importance. I think some of the speakers on the other side tried to put this across. And I

think everyone in Saskatchewan believes this. When you look at it this is one of the legislated benefits that we in western Canada have. We have very few of them. But this is one, and this is one thing that we don't want to see let slip away, because once you let legislation slip away let me tell you it would be very difficult to get that in again. People say, "Well why subsidize the movement of grain?" And I say, "Why not subsidize the movement of grain?" What else could be better that you subsidize than the major foodstuffs in the country that we live in?

We see the government in Ottawa. They are quite capable of subsidizing air transport. They are quite capable of subsidizing airports. They are quite capable of subsidizing seaways and things of this nature . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, General Motors, and companies that are going under. Why them, is it necessary to pick upon the crowrate, the one thing that gives a fixed benefit to the farmers of this country? I wonder why that is necessary — especially at this time and especially in listening to the budget of the government opposite yesterday.

If you were a farmer out there, and you knew what the input costs of farming were and if they would be addressed, things might be better for the farmer. But they are not addressed. What are the costs to the farmer? Number one is his fuel costs, and there has been no decrease in fuel costs. In fact, if I remember correctly, the subsidy that they did get from the government opposite was removed last year. So the fuel costs are still there and they are going to increase, and they are going to cut back the amount of money that farmer finally achieves for his labour. What about the interest costs for the farmer? The interest costs continue to mount.

We are in the days of modern farming. All my friends out there are using fertilizers and using them to a great extent. The costs of fertilizers and inputs, Mr. Speaker, continue to increase year after year, for some strange reason that I fail to understand. In a province that has a great deal of natural gas, we, for our great wisdom, do not use that natural gas to manufacture fertilizer for our farmers. I fail to understand the rationale for that. But that seems to be the case in point right now. So, therefore, you look at their fertilizer costs going up.

The general inflationary costs on everything else, to feed and to clothe their families and all of these things, are going up. The local taxes are going up. I have a farm and I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that my local tax goes up year after year in spite of the great programs that the government opposite says it has. But it's the government that drives taxes up.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at all of those things facing our farmers, we see that the only constant in that whole scenario is the crowrate — the crowrate that will allow that farmer to move his product at a subsidized rate. And we see in the face of these difficult times that there are those who say the crowrate should be changed. I stand firmly opposed to that, Mr. Speaker.

I wonder if that is really the position of the government opposite. I wonder, because I heard the news this morning and the Prime Minister of this country is supposed to have said that Mr. Blakeney kind of thought that maybe it should be changed, but now with an election coming on, he doesn't think it should.

Now, it wouldn't be strange to see a reversal of position, because yesterday we sat in this House and we saw approximately seven reversals of position — about-face on the budget; about-face on rural gas, a turn right around; the E&H tax on the children's

clothes, a turn right around; the purpose gas for the tandem-axle trucks, a turn right around. So there could be many more of these. It is no shock to me that the Premier changes his position, and looking at his speech the other day, I just wonder what he meant by this, and I want to quote from page 624 of *Hansard* where the Premier, on March 17, 1982, was speaking on the crowrate. He said:

I have seen suggestions that the amount the farmers are going to pay is only the crowrate plus 50 per cent. And out of that they say that it's only \$750 a year for a farmer. Who says that can break a farmer? Well, perhaps if it were the crowrate plus 50 per cent, and perhaps if it were that the federal government would guarantee that it won't be more, then some other arguments might be germane.

What does he mean by that? Does he mean to move it a little bit might be okay? Or to move it a little bit more? Or does he really mean what he's saying or trying to say now because of political expedience — no change at all? I would like that answered. Are those arguments germane? Does that mean there could be a little bit of movement? I see the Attorney General will speak in the debate and I'm sure he will attempt to try to bail his partner out and answer that question. So I would like to get that answer from the Attorney General.

So anyway, Mr. Speaker, I think we have to realize that any attempt to move the crowrate at this time, when the costs to the farmers of Saskatchewan are escalating, are ever-increasing, would most certainly be a mistake — a serious mistake — and something that we on this side of the House would certainly be against.

Mr. Speaker, I say that many believe that there is need for improvement in the railroads, certainly, I think it's well-understood throughout the West and perhaps there are ways in which the railroads could be improved so we could get more grain to market. But I say, Mr. Speaker, that that should not be done on the backs of the western farmers. There is no way.

The railroads in this country benefit all the people in this country and not just the western farmer. I think it would be most terrible if the one guaranteed benefit that the western farmer received under the confederation bargain would be taken away and that guarantee — his only input that is statutory and fixed in these days of increasing prices — would be changed. I would not stand for that, and my colleagues on this side do not believe, in any way, shape or form, that the improvements in the railroads in this country should be done on the backs of the western farmers. I told you at the beginning of my remarks that I would say what was on my mind in a brief and concise way. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I think it is very evident that I would be supporting the motion.

**HON. MR. BOWERMAN:** — Mr. Speaker, I regret that we find it necessary to be involved in such a debate in this legislature. I find it rather erroneous that we should, in fact, find ourselves involved in a situation where we have to defend, in Saskatchewan, a very important element in so far as the livelihood of Saskatchewan is concerned.

It's interesting to watch the members opposite who are the spokesmen for the Progressive Conservative Party in Saskatchewan. Here is the cream of the crop of the Progressive Conservative Party. It's interesting to view their performance in this debate. It's interesting to hear their comments not only in here but also in the halls of the legislature. It's interesting to hear their speeches at the nominating conventions. In

fact, it's interesting to see the candidates they choose as they go about the country nominating their candidates for the upcoming election, whenever it might be.

Mr. Speaker, their actions and their comments are not entirely consistent at all times. In the House, they don't seem too anxious to participate in the debate, even as the previous member said. He was going to make some brief comments. He really didn't know why it was necessary to be in this debate and felt that we should move the debate along. Why do we need to talk about it? Why don't we vote on it? Why don't we get the issue going? Why don't we go to Ottawa with it?

Mr. Speaker, one should analyze for a minute this rather unique position. It's a position which they say they hold and support very vigorously. They say, so far as their stand on crow is concerned, that they are very vigorous supporters of the crow. Yet they don't want to talk about it. Can you understand the uniqueness of that kind of position? They have the opportunity to demonstrate to the people of Saskatchewan that in fact they support the crowrate in this province, yet they say, "Oh, well let's move it along. Let's not talk about it. Let's just have the vote and get it over with."

Mr. Speaker, what kind of credibility is there in this kind of a performance? No one really believes that, if one feels strongly about an issue, he wouldn't want to talk about it. No one believes that, particularly of a politician. No one really believes that a person running for political office can support a position vigorously when he doesn't want to talk about it. What kind of credibility is there in that?

It's interesting to hear their speeches and their comments, as I say, at nominating conventions. They say, "We support the crow." Then they say that there should be an all-party position given to Ottawa. Finally, they nominate a person who is historically opposed to the crow, the wheat board, and the wheat pools. Yet the candidate, the new nominee, takes his place at the stand and says, "I support the crow." He has been historically opposed to the crow, historically opposed to the wheat board, historically opposed to the pools, historically opposed to the co-operative movement. However, he gets to the nominating stand and says, "I support the crow." But he doesn't want to talk about the crow. He won't go on and talk about the crow . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'll give you evidence of where it is. It is the most recent nominee in my constituency — absolutely a man who opposes the objectives which are set forth in so far as the crow and orderly marketing are concerned.

Mr. Speaker, these Johnny-come-lately boys, faced with an election in Saskatchewan where you either support or don't support the crow, find themselves in a bind. The only way that they can come out of this bind is to say, "Oh yes, we support it. But let's not talk about it." That's exactly the position they find themselves in.

We have to keep in mind certain fundamental points as we debate this resolution. The first is that the crowrate was put in place in a previous decade to assist the railways to build a rail line into southeast British Columbia. The second is that in 1925, when the railways wanted the Crow's Nest agreement done away with, Ottawa instead enshrined the Crow's Nest rate in statute. MacKenzie King didn't do this because he opposed the railways. He did it because the Farmer-Labour members of western Canada insisted on a meaningful protection for farmers from the monopolistic powers of the railways. The prime minister needed the support, at that point in time, of the western Farmer-Labour members. These amendments to the Railway Act to enshrine the Crow's Nest Pass agreement marks a very important even — one of the few times in Canadian history



that the West has been heard and listened to on a matter so close to our well-being.

I am concerned of late that our regional voice is being heard less and less in Ottawa and our fears become reality when we consider the Pepin plan, for the Pepin plan threatens to do away with two of the fundamental principles of the crowrate — a fixed, non-variable rate for the producer and equal rates for equal distance. These fundamental variable rate for the producer and equal rates for equal distance. These fundamental principles, Mr. Speaker, have, over the years, been the cornerstone of our way of life in Saskatchewan. Because of them our country elevator system was built. Because of them rural communities grew and flourished beside the country elevators. Because of them, Mr. Speaker, our family farms and our rural communities continue to support a healthy, attractive way of life — a way of life that supports our farmers as the world's most efficient producers of grain. The rights of producers are protected by the crowrate against the railways. The right of Saskatchewan people to choose their own way of life is also protected by the crowrate and this government believes in that right to choose.

We believe that economic considerations alone should not determine where people live. We have shown our commitment to rural life in Saskatchewan in a number of ways, by any number of programs to ensure that people living on farms in the small communities enjoy the same qualities of life as those who live in our urban centres. We have done our part to ensure that the stable foundation of rural life, the crowrate, is enhanced by the programs which support the quality of rural life. Nursing homes, ambulance services, regional libraries, community colleges, local utility and social services offices, road building programs — all these and many more are testimony to our belief that the people who choose to live in rural Saskatchewan should enjoy a high quality of life. I travel throughout the province, Mr. Speaker, I see that our efforts have been worthwhile. I see small communities thriving. I see people working together to maintain and to improve their communities and to see young people committed to the agricultural way of life. To provide this choice for people, we have had to put aside some very positive economic considerations, and we've done so willingly. We have recognized, quite simply, that it costs more to run a hospital, a school, or a library in a small centre than it does in Regina or in Saskatoon. We could have said, Mr. Speaker, over the years, that they cost too much. We could have said that if people want these services, let them move to Regina or to Saskatoon or to the larger centre. But we didn't say that. Instead we put ourselves to work to bring services to people and not to make people go to the services.

What would happen to these achievements if the Pepin plan were introduced, Mr. Speaker? What would happen to our Saskatchewan way of life if the federal Liberals and the Saskatchewan Conservatives are allowed to go ahead and kill the crow? The answer hinges on the issue of non-variable rates. Nowhere in the Pepin plan is there an assurance that the non-variable rate would be maintained. Nowhere in the Pepin plan is there a guarantee of equal rates for equal distance. What the Pepin plan offers (and it's an offer to the railways and not to the producer) is adequate compensation fixed in statute for the railways for the movement of grain.

CPR security, Mr. Speaker, is fixed in statute in the Pepin plan. The same mechanism that for decades has protected the producer from the railways, is now being proposed to protect the railways. Nobody is very clear on what the railways need to be protected from, but if Pepin has his way, and if these people are willing to drag their feet and not talk about the issue (as they have been in this House and as they are proposing), then the farmers will not be protected but will be vulnerable to the plan which is being announced.

Specifically, the producer will be vulnerable to variable rates — variable rates set by the railways, variable rates which will be used to reshape our country elevator system into a system which is economical and is efficient in terms of the railways, variable rates to which our farmers will have to adapt, variable rates which will remove the last measure of control and the last degree of choice which Saskatchewan people have over where and how they live and how they raise their families. The effect this will have on rural life and rural communities in Saskatchewan will be devastating.

You can be sure the economy and efficiency described by the railways does not include elevators on branch lines. It does not include elevators on secondary mainlines. You can be sure that it matters little to the railways which communities live and which communities die. You can be sure that the railway of life which we have fought and struggled so hard to maintain is not very close to the hearts of the CPR in its desire to have the crowrate done away with. Economical and efficient unit trains and inland terminals will be a new way of life for Saskatchewan — one that our people did not choose and one they are having imposed upon them.

And what can we make of Pepin's promises that killing the crow will be good for us and for our economy? Pepin promises that killing the crow will improve mainline capacity in the western rail system, an old argument and a non-valid argument. We were only supposed to upgrade the branch line system by killing the crow. We were only supposed to be able to have more hopper cars if we killed the crow. Our branch lines are being upgraded. We have 6,000 new hopper cars in Saskatchewan and we didn't need to kill the crow to get either one.

Pepin promises more livestock production and secondary processing on the Prairies if we kill the crow. Pepin's promise might be more credible if he talked about other factors hindering livestock production and secondary processing, particularly if he would talk about Japan's tariff of \$90 per metric tonne on rapeseed oil. The domestic feed grain policy, the feed grain assistance adjustment program — Pepin doesn't talk about these obstacles.

Nor does the opposition; they don't want to talk about these obstacles. They don't want to stand in this legislature and debate this issue. All they want to do is have a quick vote and get out. They don't want to put their names and their issues on the record. They have too many of those positions from days gone by which they do have on the record and which are causing them some embarrassment today. Pepin doesn't talk about these obstacles; he only talks about killing the crow. His promise in my estimation, Mr. Speaker, is not credible.

It is far more illuminating to consider what Mr. Pepin doesn't talk about. He doesn't talk about the strong likelihood that our producers will be paying 10 times the crow by 1990. He doesn't talk about the loss to the Saskatchewan economy of \$1.4 billion a year by 1990. He doesn't talk about the inestimable damage that would be done to Saskatchewan people and their rural communities if the crow goes. He only talks about adequate compensation for railways. He believes that the crow is non-negotiable. We believe that the crow is the backbone of our Saskatchewan way of life, and we believe that our grain producers deserve a modern rail system. That is why we have put forward the Saskatchewan solution. Our alternative calls for a commitment to the crowrate — a commitment, Mr. Speaker, to modernize the rail system, and a commitment to public equity in the rail system. Our alternative, I believe, is a positive solution.

We see no need to do away with the crow. We can continue to build on the farm rural base already ensured by the crow. Pepin's plan is a clear and distinct threat to all Saskatchewan people — not just the farmers of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And the choice is clear. You are either for the farmers or you are for the railways. You are either for the people having a choice, having control over their lives, or you are giving away the farm to the railways. I for one am proud to be for the farmers. I am proud of the achievements of the people of Saskatchewan in carving homes and communities on these prairies over these long numbers of years. I am proud of their commitment to Saskatchewan and I will, Mr. Speaker, support, fight for, and fight to, retain the crowrate.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. CHAPMAN:** — Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a privilege to rise on this occasion in support of this motion before the Assembly, on behalf of my constituents, my government, and in particular, in support of our Hon. Gordon MacMurchy.

Mr. Speaker, since my election some 16 months ago I've shared the confidence of a great number of my constituents to give voice to a number of their concerns. Let me inform this Assembly that I have enjoyed a very warm experience over the past two to three months, but before I deal with that warm experience let me make a comment that today we're hearing a lot about a new deal, a new bargain and a new plan — the Pepin plan.

In an information release by the Canadian Minister of Transport, he talks about what Pepin calls the new deal, the new bargain, the new plan, and I quote from a February 8, 1982 bulletin:

It's a comprehensive approach to meet western Canada's future railway systems and needs.

The key element of the shared approach is that railways guarantee performance and service related to grain transportation in return for a new level of financial compensation.

Let me relate that new, warm experience, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have enjoyed over the last two to three months. Mr. Pepin, in a *Leader-Post* report dated March 13, I believe, thinks that his policy is gaining ground. Let me tell you that since I have been in public life — and it is now some five years as an alderman — I've been associated with a number of public issues throughout my career. On occasion I've been on the wrong side and, on occasion, my people and my constituents in the community that I'm trying to serve quit talking to me.

Let me inform this Assembly that never before in the experience I have had on a public issue, have I had so many people talking to me and sharing a trust and confidence about our opposition and our stand on the Pepin plan.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. CHAPMAN:** — Consequently, let me bring the voice of the farmer, the residents of the hamlets, villages and towns and, yes, the residents of the city of Estevan to the Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin and to the members opposite who purport to have some new conceptual approach to this particular problem. The answer of the farmers in the

Estevan constituency is: no deal; no to the new guarantee; no to the improved level of farmer-shared compensation; no to the Pepin plan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in that same information package from the Minister of Transport, dated February 8, 1982, under a policy statement on western rail transportation, Mr. Pepin states, and I quote:

The government is fully conscious of the historic importance of the statutory rate to western Canada. In the earlier decades of this century the statutory rate made an important contribution to the settlement and economic development of the West.

Let me draw again to your attention that Mr. Pepin purports to know the historic importance. The hon. member for Indian Head-Wolseley just talked about the historic importance of this plan. He purports to recognize the historic importance of the particular plan but he doesn't believe it.

Mr. Speaker, the people of my constituency are also fully aware of the history and the bargain that was struck in landlocked Saskatchewan. Grain transportation meant railways. A deal was struck and that deal is as valid today as it was when the payment for the deal was made. It guaranteed a rate that could not be tampered with by the railways; a plan that gave the producer a delivery system which guaranteed equal rate for equal distance.

I submit that someone else recognizes the full value of the deal that was made. Now they have their house in order to open negotiations again to further benefit from the original bargain. That is the Canadian Pacific empire. As documented in the *Maclean's* magazine dated August 24, 1981, Canadians are now witnessing an enterprise that is Canada's largest industrial empire — Canadian Pacific Ltd. with assets of \$13 billion and Canadian Pacific Enterprises Ltd. with assets totalling \$8.5 billion — in total some \$21.5 billion. Yes, Westerners well remember the bargain. Yes, Westerners well remember the history that the railways acquired 36 million acres in government land and is still landlord to about 1,000 tenant farmers on 350,000 acres of prairie land. My constituents are also fully aware that much of this land was sold to the settlers but that the mineral rights are still in the possession of the Canadian Pacific empire.

Just mention the crow debate in my constituency and you will hear about those land deals that established the foundation for the empire of the Canadian Pacific. Mr. Pepin, the folks in Saskatchewan have started a fine endeavor — the production of community history books which have brought a great deal of awareness of that history.

Let me be permitted to place before this Assembly an extract from a history book prepared by the R.M. of Benson, No. 35 in my constituency. They entitled their history book *Toils, Tears and Thanksgiving*, and they referred to a map of homesteaders, found on page 21 of the history book, of just one of the townships within the municipality: section 1, CPR; all of section 3, CPR; all of section 5, CPR. So, 16 sections out of 36, 45 per cent of that township were given to the CPR. This would be, for the hon. member for Indian Head-Wolseley, some very good conceptual history reading, and also for the Leader of the Conservative Party opposite, one who claims to be a third-generation farmer, one who states he is on the side of the retention of the crow.

Let's expand this conceptual thinking of the doctor in agricultural economics. In the *Canadian Journal of Agricultural Economics* of 1978, he stated:

Based on a conceptual analysis of the Crow's Nest rates, it is plausible to find that these rates may not be in the public interest.

I want to direct this Assembly back to the conceptual thinking of the council of the R.M. No. 35, on whether it thinks it is plausible or not. In a letter dated March 8, 1982, to the Hon. Mr. Pepin, the conceptual analysis of the R.M. of Benson stated:

We, as members of the council of the R.M. of Benson No. 35, add our support to the request for the retention of the statutory crowrate for freight and grain transportation. The agreement of the crowrate was Canada's confederation bargain. The federal government gave to the Canadian Pacific Railways land and mineral concessions to build the railway and it later received more aid when it could not finish due to lack of money.

The R.M. recognizes that expenses are going up, but so are the values of the commodities it was given, which enabled it to exist as a company. It is also true that it has become a large and strong organization with valuable assets. Many of these assets, however, have been moved into other companies, and consequently it can complain that it is losing money by hauling grain at the crowrate prices.

The R.M. goes on to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker:

This protection should not be altered. This change would not accomplish the improved services which are needed.

That is the R.M.'s conceptual type of thinking of history.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. CHAPMAN:** — The R.M. of Benson No. 35, in its conclusion, unanimously agreed to submit its opposition to change and was talking to the member for the constituency of Estevan. A businessman in the community of Estevan also shared some history with me on the value of the lands and minerals that we made in that confederation bargain. This businessman, who has been in business for some 30 years in the extraction of minerals from CPR properties, informed me that he has transferred to the CPR some \$300,000. Let me inform this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, that in unison my constituents are saying the federal government and railroads are all proponents of the new deal. And possibly the member for Rosetown-Elrose was one of those proponents when he told this legislature on December 3, 1980, and I quote:

The Minister of Agriculture is still saying no to no changes in the crowrate. I wonder if it's a realistic stand. This is the policy of the Conservative government in Ottawa, put forward during its short term in office. There is a need for some change.

My constituents are saying to their member for Estevan, to the Government of Saskatchewan, to the federal government and to the railroads, "No change in the crowrate. No axing of the confederation bargain with the railroads. If you open the deal, the whole deal is open and again we'll get at a comprehensive package of transportation." The Pepin plan has an answer for that proposition in that same March 13 article in the *Leader-Post* where Mr. Pepin thinks his plan is gaining ground.

The federal government also can't force CP Ltd. to take money from other subsidiaries to finance expansion of the CP Rail facilities. CP and the shareholders from its branches, Marathon Realty, PanCanadian Petroleum, Fording Coal and CP Air would take us to court, and we'd probably still be there.

Well, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Pepin can stand on the side of the railroads. Mr. Pepin is in the place where the rules of transport are set. It's indeed my pleasure to stand here in this Assembly today in support of the motion square on the side of the farmer, square on the side of my constituents, and give notice to Mr. Pepin. No deal, no bargain, and no Pepin plan.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I certainly welcome the opportunity to enter the debate today. I don't have any prepared speeches. We don't have a whole horde of people out there rattling away on typewriters. We don't have that. We just have a few . . . (inaudible interjections) . . . It's just lovely, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They get so irritated when I stand. I just enjoy that so much. I really do. I was saying that we are able to speak from our minds and speak from our hearts. We don't need to have it all typed down before us. We can think on our own; we have a very good ability to think on our own.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what we're dealing with very simply is a motion of this Assembly — a motion, incidentally, that was proposed in real terms by our Leader of the Opposition. Very unfortunately, they weren't able to get together in personal terms to put the motion together, but they were able to consult, as I understand it, over the telephone and were able to agree on a form of a motion. The motion is not all that bad. Certainly I'm not going to read the motion. It's just saying that we recognize the grave social and economic repercussions of the statutory rate being changed and of course no person in Saskatchewan, let alone any person in the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, could disagree with that.

Now it is interesting, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to see that this Assembly, and in particular the members of the government, are attempting to make a case that the opposition is not in favour of the motion. Now I don't know why they would want to do that. I really don't. The fact of the matter is that the Progressive Conservative opposition is in favour of retaining the current statutory crowrate, not "a" statutory rate as the Premier believes, but the current statutory crowrate. That, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is really what this debate should be all about.

Now, you stop and think for a minute and you say, "Okay, why do we want to retain the current statutory rate on crow?" There is one single reason we want to retain that rate: the farmers of Saskatchewan cannot stand one further increase in their costs, not one further increase in their costs. They know and they know very well that the biggest cost they have today in the province of Saskatchewan is in fact the Government of Saskatchewan. You hit them with high utility rates right through the line — Sask Power, Sask Tel. You've denied them access to natural gas, a cheaper form of fuel. You've charged that our proposal is too expensive. You charged initially that it couldn't even be done. Then we had the flip-flop and fly act; you turned right around and said, "Oh well, maybe we can start to phase in a program of natural gas for the farmers."

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this government found that out there in rural Saskatchewan, and not only in rural Saskatchewan, but in the major urban centres, which know very well that their livelihood depends on agriculture, there is growing support for Progressive Conservative Party proposals with which we are going to in fact lower the farmer's costs. That is what is significant, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and that is really what this crow debate is all about. We can't change the statutory rate as it exists today because they, because of their own government, cannot stand one further increase.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have already condemned in my remarks here today the argument being made by government members that the opposition doesn't support this motion; I am not going to spend a lot of time attempting to indicate that the government doesn't support it. I believe that the Government of Saskatchewan does support the motion. I believe that they do want to retain the statutory rate — the government, as a whole. They have one problem and that is their Premier — the only one I am aware of, at least. Their premier has consistently, for a long period of time now, set himself up as the great negotiator — negotiate, conciliate, give away, lose, fence-sit, you name it. Now, it is going to be pretty hard to ride this crow. If it is going north, I hope he is on it. None the less, that is what is happening. The government has one position — the agricultural minister and the NDP agricultural committee — but the Premier doesn't wholeheartedly agree with that.

I know the Attorney General says that he would like us to go to the polls and go out to the people and stack the credibility of Allan Blakeney against the credibility of Grant Devine or any member of the Progressive Conservative Party. Well, I am not having any difficulty in my riding stacking his credibility against mine or any member on this side of the House, including Grant Devine, who isn't here but who darn soon will be. And he won't be on this side; he will be on that side. So Mr. Attorney General, you'd better plan to move fairly soon too, because you might find yourself sitting with him.

Now, then, I want to refer to this rag that was sent out by the NDP caucus. I only want to raise this very briefly. I am not going to waste my time discussing the content. It was very interesting. It was funny in fact; it was actually funny. There were so many of these that overflowed in the garbage can in our post office. It was kind of a wet, sloppy day, you understand. They were tripping out of the garbage can right near the door and were getting tramped on by people's feet and dragged out onto the steps. Here I go to get my mail. I have this darned thing for a walk-way into the post office. I literally did. I walked in on this thing. That's where it darned well belonged. Obviously people agreed with me on that. They sure weren't taking it home with them. If it had been 20 or 30 years ago, they might have had a reason to take this home with them, but we've progressed a little from then. I certainly don't have any use for it but I want to retain it for today.

I don't know whether any of you have ever read this very handsome little pamphlet called "Trudeau's Master Plan for the Betrayal of Canada." I'm sure that maybe some of you have at one time come across it.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Who's the author?

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — It is published by the Canadian League of Rights. You might want to mark this down: Box 130, Flesherton, Ontario, N0C 1E0. A single copy is only \$1 so the Attorney General should be able to handle that okay.

I just want to quote, if I may, Mr. Deputy Speaker:

In March of 1968, before Pierre Elliott Trudeau was even leader of the Liberal Party, the Canadian Intelligence Service published a summary of his background. While this evoked an incredible campaign of hate and smear against the service and its publisher, the background documentation has never been refuted. Following are excerpts:

“In 1940 Mr. Trudeau was booted out of the Canadian Officer Training Corps during the war for lack of discipline. In 1941 he was associated with anti-war reds, and supported Bloc Populaire in undermining the war effort. In 1945 he enrolled at Harvard, spawning ground of leftist intellectuals.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Garbage.

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — Garbage? Do you deny it? I'll just go over a few here.

He was barred from the United States as an inadmissible person. Again he's referred to as a leftist. In 1960 he led a communist delegation to Peking for a red victory celebration.

This is where it gets more interesting.

In 1963 he campaigned with the NDP against Liberals whom he called idiots because they had decided to accept nuclear defence weapons.

What I'm pointing out here is that the Premier and the Prime Minister are not all that much different on the basis that the Prime Minister has proven time and again that he is a socialist and is further left than even the Premier of Saskatchewan has ever dreamt of being. On the basis of that documentation it is not hard for me to understand why the Premier of Saskatchewan and the Prime Minister of this country have a lot in common. It is not difficult for me to understand that, when we're into an election year and the government has its back against the wall with all of the issues against it, it needs something desperately to fight an election on.

I felt it rather strange and most interesting that along comes the federal government to provide the NDP government in Saskatchewan with an election issue. They said, “We'll take away the crow.” That was one. The other issue that came along was cost sharing: “Well, we'll do away with cost-sharing programs. Then you can go back to the people of Saskatchewan and say, ‘Oh, we have to fight those Liberals because they're going to take away medicare we have no more money and can't fund it.’” That's a real sob story there against the federal Liberals. I can see the campaign now. I can see it building. It's going to be the NDP campaigning against the federal Liberals. It's popular here in western Canada to criticize the federal Liberals. But the facts are that that is only half of the problem as far as the people of Saskatchewan are concerned. Pierre Trudeau is half of the problem and Allan Blakeney, the Premier of our province, is the other half. You don't have to look too far. You just look at the gas breakdown. The cost of gasoline is equally shared by the federal and provincial government. In other words, the federal government isn't hurting you any more in the price of gasoline per litre or gallon than is the provincial government. In fact, you're leading the way. You're taking more of a chunk out of gasoline than is the federal government . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, it's all about the crow. It's all about the crow, because, as I prefaced in my remarks, the reason to maintain the statutory rate is because the farmers can't afford any further



increases. Their costs are being driven up by you people.

So then what do you do? Now you've got your election issue. The arguments were made in the House and they don't need much more substantiation. Rather than spending the time visiting with Saskatchewan people from whom you knew what the answer would be: save the statutory rate.

I was at the crow meeting in Whitewood. Mr. MacMurchy was there. He had his films. I don't know how many people were from my riding. It's hard to identify in a situation like that, but it doesn't matter. I was introduced, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I got a very good applause, so obviously the people there, whether they were all from my riding or none were from my riding or a part were and a part weren't, appreciated the fact that I was there. They didn't see me as the enemy of the crowrate, and that's significant, because throughout this debate your people are attempting to make out that the Progressive Conservative Party of Saskatchewan is the enemy in the crow debate. If we're the enemy I don't know why they give us this great big applause, you know, when we're introduced. I don't know why they do that, because I've never had constituents do anything out of kindness yet. You must earn their respect and earn it hard.

So there's no problem there. I know the Attorney General is concerned about trying to build an issue on the crow, but it won't build very well because you don't have the foundation that is sincere and right, not when you have a Premier that is not with the NDP caucus, not when you have a Premier that has such very close ties in his thinking with the Prime Minister of Canada. The suspicion is there.

I've been asked, "What do you think about this Western Canada Concept?" I'll tell you very simply what I think about that. I'll tell you very simply. The reason that you have a Western Canada Concept Party in formation in this province epitomizes the animosity that the people of Saskatchewan have toward Pierre Trudeau in Ottawa and the Premier and this government in Saskatchewan. That's the big reason you have something coming in the Western Canada Concept.

Now then, Mr. Attorney General, before you interject and tell me anything, I'm going to tell you this: before I will be kicked out of my country by Prime Minister Trudeau or by Allan Blakeney, I'll kick them out and both of them at the same time.

Now that you people have this debate laid out and you understand what the debate is all about, you might find it a lot easier for each and every one of you to get up and discuss it. The basic and fundamental fact is that the statutory rate must stay. The statutory rate that's in existence today, that was set in 1925.

I don't know why when I sit down you'll want to put up another speaker and try again to say that the Tories don't want to maintain the statutory crowrate by using one quote or another. I'm not going to quote. I've had enough of it. I've heard you say that Devine said this, or the member for Rosetown-Elrose, or me. I see there's some stuff in print. There was some more garbage inside that. What was it? No, it wasn't either. I thought it was but it isn't. Yes, there was one about me. I was trying to find it, Mr. Attorney General, but it's not there in the garbage. It must be in some other garbage can.

At any rate, that's a futile argument. It's a futile argument to make, and I'm not going to pull out any quotes about what one of your members said that indicates that maybe he doesn't support the crowrate. Now we're getting the arguments thrown at us that the

Tories don't want to talk about it, that we don't want to talk about the crowrate. Well, of course we want to talk about the crowrate. But it seems a little futile after everyone has agreed that the crowrate should be maintained to go on and on with long speeches that are very repetitive — and I'm being repetitive; I have no choice, Mr. Speaker. What more is there to say? We know it will have an effect on the social fabric of Saskatchewan. We know that; we understand that. Most of the members on this side of the House, in fact most of the members in this whole Assembly, are from rural Saskatchewan. They understand that. There is no argument with that.

So, Mr. Speaker, I find it very difficult to understand why sensible members of this legislature would want to continually try to build an argument of defence, because if that is going to be the argument of the government opposite — building a line of division in our Assembly — it is falling into the very trap the Prime Minister of Canada wants it to fall into. He has held a “divide and conquer” policy for as long as I have known him, and it hasn't changed.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — He's a good friend of yours, then. How long have you known him?

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — The Attorney General has had opportunities to speak to the Prime Minister, I have not, and I don't care to have an opportunity to speak to that individual because that individual isn't going to vote himself out of office. The electors are going to vote him out, so those are the people I'm talking to. If I want to get rid of the Prime Minister and the Premier of this province because I vehemently disagree with their policies, then I'm going to talk to the people — not to those two individuals. So you have to understand, Mr. Attorney General, and your whole government has to understand that that man, the Prime Minister of this country, has succeeded. He has sucked your government in — even you, as flamboyant as you are, smiling for the cameras and all; he's drawn you in, too, because he's more clever. He is the only politician in this country, for that matter, who is more clever than you. He really is, and he got you too. He has you people on this crow debate; he has you divided; he has you fighting with the Tories who want to support you. We want to stand united in this province.

We want to stand united in this legislature, along with the farmers, along with the people who live in the urban centres, and we want to take a strong message to Ottawa . . . (inaudible interjections) . . . Now look at that, Mr. Speaker, if you were listening to this debate you would see that they don't like that. They don't want the assistance of the opposition. No, they don't want our support, because it would hurt them at the polls. What does that tell you? All that tells you is that they would rather divide on this crowrate issue; they would lose the crowrate for western Canadian farmers to get back in office. That's the bottom line on it.

I won't believe they care about the crowrate until I see speakers standing up and saying, “We welcome the opposition's support. We want to go united; we want to support those western Canadian farmers; we want to go after Pierre Trudeau; we want to go after the Pepin plan.” Well, I would like to see if Mr. MacMurchy had his hands in his pockets or whether he didn't. Go and speak with Pepin; speak with that man, and you can take Randy Nelson with you and speak English or French, if you like — I don't care. But you take \$100,000 which you have already spent and you sit down with Pepin. If you're such a strong debater and you're going to change this thing around — you're going to fight for the farmers, you're going to change the crowrate — let's see you go and do it where it counts.

You're not going to gain any ground by standing up there, by getting your

backbenchers up who are weak and need support; you're not going to gain any ground for keeping that crowrate by getting your backbenchers up and debating with the opposition, by saying, "Oh, you're against it; you don't want it; you want to destroy all the towns" and on and on with a lot of gibberish.

So, Mr. Speaker, how can anyone understand the position of the Government of Saskatchewan? If you are so sincere about saving the crowrate, then I would like to see you . . .

I'm going to challenge you, Mr. Speaker, I want to challenge them on this. Through the balance of this crow debate, I don't want to hear another speaker on that side of the House get up and chastise the Tories for not supporting them. You don't want that to happen. That will prove, in itself, whether or not you truly want to maintain the crowrate. That will prove it.

Mr. Attorney General, you might have to orchestrate that. Get back to your guys who haven't spoken yet and tell them to throw those speeches away. Tell them to have a bit of sense and see if they have the ability to stand up on their feet without prepared notes. Tell them to speak from their hearts, from their minds. Get them to welcome the Tory opposition support; get them to welcome this whole Assembly's support of the farmers and the people of Saskatchewan, in particular, to fight to maintain that present statutory crowrate. That's what has to be done.

We are not prepared to negotiate a settlement. We are not prepared to negotiate any kind of settlement that will change that current statutory crowrate. I think that that's been well-enough said. I don't think it really needs any comment beyond that.

There's one thing though that concerns me, and I'll conclude with this, Mr. Speaker. I've set things out. I think I've done a fairly good job. The Attorney General might disagree. That's fine. As I said, I wouldn't be surprised if he did. Trudeau has him beat every time when he gets up and fights us — divide and conquer. That's what that man wants.

I've made something out. It's a simple motion. It is asking for the support of this House. It's asking that we retain the statutory rate. We've recognized the serious ramifications of changing the current statutory crowrate. I think I've made out pretty nicely the hypocritical way that your people are approaching the debate in this House on it. I think I've done that pretty well.

There's one thing that I am concerned about . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, I don't know whether my colleagues are concerned about it. I really don't know. I've visited with two or three of them about it. I'm very concerned about it.

I know that the Minister of Agriculture at his meetings has had farmers get up and say, "Mr. MacMurchy, Mr. Minister of Agriculture, how much is this plan going to cost us and who is going to pay?" And the minister gets up and he says, "It could cost 2 times, it could cost 3 times, it could cost 5 times, it could cost 10 times the current crowrate." Well, I don't know why he didn't go on to 1,000 because 1,000 times the crowrate is a lot more scary than 10 times the crowrate.

He shouldn't have talked about that at all. If he was as confident as he should have been in knowing that he would work with the opposition (and this Assembly is the parliament of Saskatchewan, representing the people of this province) to maintain a statutory crowrate, he would have said it doesn't matter how much the plan is going to cost

because we're not going to let it change. That's what he should have said. But he didn't have that confidence. and he didn't have that confidence because he doesn't have the support of his own leader and that's the Premier of this province. He knows those comments were right there. He wasn't confident enough to say that we will not allow it to change. So he had to indicate that if it's this much it will cost so much. If it's 10 times it's going to cost that much.

I'm going to answer the second part of the question: who is going to pay? The Minister of Agriculture said, "You're right. You've got, sir. You are going to pay." Well, of course, they're going to pay. And I'd like to have had the Minister of Agriculture say at that point:

Look, it won't be just you, Mr. Farmer, who's going to pay, because we have taken the stand for a long time now that rail transportation should be a national policy — a national rail transportation system. We have taken that position. We believe that the federal government should pay so that all Canadians pay for the movement of grain and for an improved rail line system, because it's in the interest of all Canadians.

But he didn't say that. He didn't say, Mr. Speaker, that all Canadians should pay — that the federal government should pay — as was reported in the Hall commission. He said, "Well, you know, we're looking at a public investment equity concept." And there was a CKOS television interview with one Roger MacLaughlin. I was fortunate enough to catch that interview on the television one day; they had a good interview on the crowrate. There were many things said — many things we've heard Mr. MacMurchy, the Minister of Agriculture, say on numerous occasions — but they got around to the public investment equity concept. Mr. MacLaughlin said, "Tell me now, Mr. Minister, you're planning a public investment equity concept. Is that correct?" "Well," Mr. MacLaughlin said, "could you tell me how much that is going to cost?" Mr. Speaker, if you haven't listened to a word I've said since I stood on my feet, listen to this. The Minister of Agriculture replied to Mr. MacLaughlin, "We're not talking any money right now; we're just selling the concept."

That would be the same as if you went down to an automotive dealer, walked in and said, "I like that car; yes, I really do." And the fellow said, "Well, as soon as you sign the papers to purchase it, I'll put a price on it for you." That is a perfect analogy. You're trying to sell a concept to the people of this province, and you're not prepared to put a price on it.

There was one figure that came out, wasn't there? And it was \$2.1 billion. There was another figure bandied around, that the Pepin plan is going to cost Saskatchewan \$1.9 billion. Now we don't have to be too clever to realize that \$2.1 billion is more than \$1.9 billion. You take those two sets of figures and realize that the minister and this government have apparently changed their policy in believing that we should have a national transportation system where all Canadians would pay for the movement of grain and other commodities from western Canada, because it would be in the interest of all Canadians. This government doesn't believe that anymore. I'd like the next speaker on the government side of the House to stand up and tell this Assembly how much this public investment equity concept is going to cost. How much is it going to cost you to buy the CPR? It's a pretty interesting thing, if you ask me. Since I was elected to this Assembly, I have heard members opposite damning the CPR every chance they have — those terrible multinationals. Yes sir, all terrible. But it's interesting because,

you know, you would think CNR didn't exist. They just talk about CPR.

But, just the other day — was it yesterday the Premier spoke? Yes, I believe it was. Well, whenever the Premier spoke on this crow debate, he admitted for one of the first times I've ever heard it (it was really quite interesting) that the CNR wasn't any better. So how about that. Isn't that what we've been saying all along? The CNR and the CPR are asking for the same things, exactly. And now, this archenemy whom you have fought for as long as I can remember in my place in here and beyond — you want to buy part of it.

If you think \$2.1 billion is going to give you any guarantee that grain is going to move, then you had better think again, because it won't. You could have 49 per cent or 50 per cent of CPR (which we could never afford in an awfully long time if your arguments are accurate that it is such a giant with wealth in all quarters in Canada and abroad) and still not get a controlling interest in CPR. Really what you are going to do is give away \$2.1 billion. So when you're talking about the cost to Saskatchewan people and the cost to Saskatchewan farmers, I'm going to give you a future. It's pretty easy to do your mathematics on this one. Let's use the figure \$2 billion. We have 1 million people (keeping in mind that is the same population we had in 1936), so it would cost each and everyone of us \$2,000, wouldn't it? I believe it would — \$2,000. Well, I'll tell you, I don't have \$2,000 to stick into the CPR which has all that land it got in that agreement, big buildings, hotels and you name it. I don't want to invest in the CPR; no, I don't.

Then you come in with the fine line we heard the other day — members hollering across, "Do you support the hopper cars?" Are you saying the Tories are against the hopper car investment? I'll tell you, the fact is and the truth is that we support the hopper car investment but, that having been said, I'll tell you this and no one can deny it and no one can argue it: that was an alteration of the crowrate via the back door. And no farmer disagrees with that. They accept those hopper cars, but I'll tell you they don't like that idea.

Now what are we going to do? We have the hopper cars; the federal government has hopper cars through the Canadian Wheat Board. This is my third very valid point. This argument of public investment equity is what should be part of the crow debate, Mr. Speaker.

We're prepared to debate the crow. Obviously I am; I don't have a gall-darn thing here. As anyone can see, I've just been talking away about what I know. If you want any of the other members on this side of the House to get up and talk about the crow and all of its ramifications and our beliefs and where we stand, we would welcome it.

I'm challenging you now. I'm challenging any member of the government opposite (it doesn't matter which member, just any member, although I suppose it would be best coming from the Minister of Agriculture) to get up in this House and tell this Assembly what this public investment equity into the CPR is going to cost Saskatchewan grain farmers, and more generally, the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, those are three points I have made. If you don't understand now that there is unanimous support in this province, at this time, for retention of the statutory crowrate, and that we all recognize the ramifications socially and economically, then obviously you don't understand. As far as the vote is concerned, we do have a little concern over here. We're afraid that you don't want to vote on it. Mr. Speaker, we on this

side of the House are afraid that the government would just as soon this particular motion didn't come to a vote, because they know, as sure as they know that today is Friday, that this opposition is going to stand and vote with the government members of this Assembly.

It is for that reason that I have challenged one of their members to provide to me at least a ballpark figure as to what this public investment equity concept is going to cost. If you give us a figure we'll debate the crow all right — we might be here quite awhile debating the crow. Then it would be a very serious situation, where we would not only have to fight the Pepin plan and Pierre Trudeau, who are wanting to change the statutory rate, but we would also be drawn into a situation of having to defend the farmers of Saskatchewan from having to fight their provincial government as well.

As I said, we want to retain that statutory rate because the costs are too high now and you're proposing to drive the costs up even further — save the crow on the one hand and drive up the costs on the other hand. It's easy to understand.

Mr. Speaker, with that, naturally I am going to support the motion, and I am going to take my place. I hope one member from that side of the House, during the next 13 minutes, will stand and tell us what that concept is going to cost because I am very seriously concerned about it. Thank you.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. ROMANOW:** — Mr. Speaker, I must first of all thank the hon. member for the courtesy shown in giving me 13 minutes. But he can rest assured that on Monday evening when we sit to debate the crow again that I will have a further opportunity to deliver my main address. In fact, I will kind of enjoy it on Monday evening because when the opposition critic gives his criticism of the budget on Monday it will give me a chance to put forward the Government of Saskatchewan position yet again, perhaps in different ways with some new information. I thought I'd get my address out of the way today as a courtesy to the budget critic, but Monday night will be just as fine by me. So I thank the hon. member for the courtesy he has extended to me. I am sorry the member has left his place because I wanted him to hear this: I think we have heard and witnessed what I can only describe as probably one of the most scary speeches, to my mind in any event, that I have ever heard delivered in this legislature — in tone, in manner, and in content. Anyone who watched the spectacle (which is the only way one can describe it) would conclude and agree with me that the blatant red-baiting — not only of the Prime Minister, whatever you think of his policies, but of the man, and of the Premier of this province of this Saskatchewan, whatever you think of the policies of this man, and the office held by the Premier — the blatant consistent red-baiting, the vitriolic nature of the attack not on policy, I repeat again, but on personality, is scary, very scary. The comment made (which I want to take an opportunity to read in detail on Monday) about booting out from the country the Prime Minister and the Premier of the province of Saskatchewan is something which I think needs more careful analysis in the light of this Western Canada Concept threat which is facing western Canadians — the exact words which were meant and intended by those comments.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that in an election year, invariably emotions and tempers rise, even in debates such as this one, which is very emotional, on the crowrate. It's inevitable. In an election year it's inevitable that politicians, being who they are, make statements that they sometimes wish they had not made. I think I've had that experience on one or two occasions myself, Mr. Speaker.

But I think it's also important in an election year, Mr. Speaker, under this very kind of stress and excitement that is generated, that we find the true measure of the people who are seeking to govern and those who are governing. What we see by the presentation by the hon. member for Moosomin with respect to his notions of the federal government from a personal point of view, his personal views of the country and the province, the Prime Minister and the Premier, should tell this Assembly and the people of this province, a whole lot about what kind of a government we might expect if ever Mr. Devine should assume the premiership chair with, among others, the hon. member for Moosomin sitting in the treasury benches in cabinet and taking responsibility for financial decisions and policy decisions such as this crowrate. Mr. Speaker, I can only say it was one of the scariest speeches, as a Saskatchewanian and a Canadian, that I have every heard in this Assembly. You may or may not agree. I don't care if the press or anybody else agrees. That's my assessment, and I want to analyze those remarks next week on Monday in this regard.

May I also make, Mr. Speaker, before I take my place, two other points on the address. I made one point about the nature and the tone of the address. The second point I'm making, of three that I will make today, deals with what I think is the downright — I'm trying to use the word "hypocrisy" but I think it's unparliamentary — deviousness, perhaps is a more parliamentary word, of the posture taken by the Conservative caucus in this legislature on this issue of crowrate.

Those who have been following this debate during the course of the member's address heard him say specifically that the position of the Conservative Party is not to negotiate the crowrate in any way, shape, or form. He would admit he said that. He would say he said that to buttress his argument that the Conservative caucus is in support of the crow. I heard him say that distinctly; I made a note of it.

Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, the member for Thunder Creek stood up in the House and said the exact reverse. The hon. member for Thunder Creek said — and I'm going to give the exact quotation which I do not . . . Yes, I do have it at my fingertips, if it's marked here on the paper that I have. I guess I don't; I have his 1980 speech. The member for Thunder Creek said exactly the reverse, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to identify that. The member for Thunder Creek yesterday said that the Government of Saskatchewan should be at the negotiating table with Dr. Gilson trying to get the best deal for Saskatchewan farmers. And then he went on to say that if we are sitting at the negotiating table it shouldn't be Roy Romanow who is there because of what he did on the constitution for Canadians and what he did to Saskatchewan.

The second point that I make, Mr. Speaker, is: as cynical as some of my friends in the press gallery might be about this debate, as tired as perhaps all of us might be or might not be about this debate, will somebody please explain to me how credibly and responsibly those two divergent positions on such a fundamental point, tactically and substantively, as this on the crowrate can be represented as a united voice on this issue of the crowrate by the Conservative caucus? It simply can't be done, to explain it rationally.

Mr. Speaker, I see some headlines about the Conservatives wanting to stand with the government on this motion. How can I as a member of the treasury branch accept that kind of plea when I hear the member for Thunder Creek say, "I support this motion but I want you to be there at the negotiating table with Clay Gilson," on the one hand, and the member today say, "I'm with you on the crow motion but I am against being with Dr.

Clay Gilson at the negotiating table," on the other hand? They are asking the government and the people of the province of Saskatchewan to say that this is not a fundamental difference.

The hon. member says that we're splitting hairs. Well, we'll let the public decide on that. I'll have more to say about that, which I consider a fundamental contradiction, and I'll have more to say about the comments of the member for Thunder Creek less than a year ago in this legislature on the issue of the crowrate and on the issue of variable rates, in addition to some of the other comments which the hon. members opposite are tired of hearing. If I were in the Conservation potion, I, too, would realize that I'd be tired of hearing it.

Mr. Speaker, in the three minutes left to me this morning, I do want to say very briefly a few words as a result of the Prime Minister's address yesterday to the Liberal Party — or what's left of the Liberal Party in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I as one member, was most interested to read of the reports and to hear of those reports of the Prime Minister's so-called assurances on the crowrate and on this crowrate debate. He is reported, while speaking to the Liberals in Regina, to have said, "If there is a consensus among prairie farmers against variable rates, then there will be no variable rates." That is the Prime Minister's assurance.

Mr. Speaker, from my point of view and the government's point of view, that can only, at best, be categorized as a conditional assurance, and it's a conditional assurance that deeply concerns me and the members of this government. It concerns me very much because it came from the same Prime Minister who once said:

We won't change the crow until there is a consensus in the West in favour of changing it.

We said then there was no such consensus, and the Minister of Agriculture, Mr. MacMurchy, tells us now that there is no consensus and yet in the light of the fact that the overwhelming consensus is the exact opposite way — not to touch the crow — and in spite of this previous assurance, all we know is that the federal government of Mr. Trudeau is now moving ahead with the so-called Pepin plan to scrap the crow. That is what that assurance was worth.

And so this latest assurance makes me wonder whether it is worth any more than the last one that he gave. Mr. Speaker, in the case of the Prime Minister and the federal Liberal government, actions on this issue speak louder than words. If the Prime Minister is really serious about guaranteeing equal rates for equal distance for our grain farmers, he has the power to alter the terms of reference of Dr. Gilson's talks to make that abundantly clear once and for all. He did not give that assurance, nor has he taken that action, and I see no move whatsoever in that direction. And accordingly, that term of reference remains on Dr. Gilson's plate. The terms of reference remained unchanged, and he has left it to the same Dr. Gilson, his own appointed federal negotiator, to define whether or not that consensus to change to variable rates exists. To me, Mr. Speaker, that's as assurance without the word 'sure' in it, because I have to ask, with all due respect to Dr. Gilson, who is he to decide whether there is a consensus or not, as able, intelligent and well-motivate an economics professor as he may be? The simple fact of the matter is that this is not a question of simple economics, it is a question of social policy or, if you will, in the best sense of the word, the politics of western Canada and Saskatchewan.



this is an issue which should be left to elected representatives. I should be left to our Saskatchewan farmers and our Saskatchewan people, not to unelected, appointed people — be they professors or whoever, no matter how well intentioned or how able — to say whether or not there is a sufficient consensus to protect the equal rates proposal and the crowrate proposal. So I say to the Saskatchewan farmers, notwithstanding the Prime Minister's remarks of last night, caveat emptor on those remarks. Buyer beware. The fight for the crowrate which has only begun must continue. It is far from safe despite what the so-called assurance of last night was. You all have heard the minister in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board saying that Saskatchewan farmers (in fact the Prime Minister himself accused us of doing this) are being hysterical about the crow debate. The member for Moosomin said virtually the same thing a few minutes before he closed up his speech.

Mr. Speaker, in closing I want to say that I have more respect for our farmers than that. They're vehement, adamant, and determined in their support of the crow, yes; hysterical, no. The last time we disagreed with Ottawa, some said we were being hysterical — the same Prime Minister and the same federal people. It was untrue then and it's untrue today to say that we are being hysterical on the crow debate. We do know that because our farmers have stood up for what they believe in, Ottawa is now starting to back down. That is a good sign in what the Prime Minister said last night, if any good sign can be obtained. It shows that our pressure is being felt. He would not have made the statement that he made yesterday one month ago. And now is the time to keep the pressure on, not to ease it off. This is the time to keep the debates and the speeches going on the crowrate in this Assembly and outside this Assembly, not to cut them off.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. ROMANOW:** — The crow has lost a few feathers in this fray so far, which is only the beginning. But I want to say thanks to the persistent efforts of the Minister of Agriculture, Mr. MacMurchy, and the Saskatchewan farmers. I think that even Ottawa now knows that the old bird still has lots of life and fight in it yet.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. ROMANOW:** — And how much fight there is still left in it, Mr. Speaker, I will want to demonstrate on Monday evening when I pick up this debate. I, therefore, beg leave to adjourn.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 1:03 p.m.