

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
December 7, 1982

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

QUESTIONS

Transfer of Harry Van Mulligen

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On Monday we observed the phenomenon of the Minister of the Environment disgracing himself. Presumably today we can assume that this issue of Mr. Van Mulligen has had about all the help it can stand from the Premier, since he is missing today.

My question, though, is to the Minister of Environment. This morning on CKCK TV's "A.M. Magazine," the mayor of Regina added his voice to the growing chorus of concerned people about your paranoia for destroying freedom of speech, conscience and association. I know members opposite aren't enjoying this matter, but my question is: how do you square your position with the charter of rights, bill of rights, and the Saskatchewan Human Rights Code? How do you square that with what the *Leader-Post* has described as your vindictive transfer of Mr. Van Mulligen to P.A.?

HON. MR. HARDY: — Mr. Speaker, first of all, I guess that's the hon. member's description of it. I'm sure it isn't mine. I understand, Mr. Speaker, that right now Mr. Van Mulligen has applied for an injunction in the courts, and if it is before the courts, I would prefer not to make any comments at this time.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — I am not in any sense suggesting that you comment on the issue before the court. But in light of the fact that you could have transferred him in Regina to a less sensitive position, how are other public servants to interpret this, other than a warning to them that if they might lapse into a moment's independent thought and express something you don't like, they may be transferred? How else are they to interpret this?

HON. MR. HARDY: — Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the opposition member mentioned that he is in a very sensitive position. I was glad he acknowledged that because they haven't to date. You know what I said before, we didn't really have one in Sask Housing, so I just have no other comment.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — And what was the overpowering rush about doing it two days after he moved the motion on city council?

HON. MR. HARDY: — Mr. Speaker, again we are talking about something that is before the courts right now and I think it wouldn't be in my realm of responsibility to answer that.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Let me try then to get the minister on to a subject which was of direct concern to the mayor this morning. As I understand, what he has pointed out that four of his aldermen work for the provincial government, a fifth is married to a

provincial government employee, and what he has said is that his council cannot operate effectively in this atmosphere. What he has asked for is this: if you people can't respect the fundamental freedoms that are guaranteed in legislation in the constitution, will you at least clearly define the extent to which your paranoia has circumscribed those freedoms? Will you at least issue a clear policy statement so that other provincial government employees won't make the mistake of what I call lapsing in to some independent thought?

HON. MR. HARDY: — Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that in the near future the Premier will be issuing a statement in due course.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — What do you mean by “in due course”? Just when may we expect this?

HON. MR. HARDY: — Mr. Speaker, I would say.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Well, let's get onto a different city council. You people are just attracting no end of support from all around the province on this. Let's go onto a different city council and hear some more of the support for your position.

This is a new question, Mr. Speaker, I want to quote, since members opposite do not apparently read the daily media, what an alderman in Moose Jaw had to say about it, a Mr. Hunchuk. Mr. Hunchuk told reporters that this province's brand of discipline reminds him of stories his grandfather once told about suppression of speech in the Ukraine. He heard those stories when he was a boy, and now he says he's hearing those stories again.

My question is: what is it your people have to fear? You have this overwhelming majority in this Chamber. You control the reins of power. Why is it that you are so paranoid that you must deny freedom of speech that has traditionally been enjoyed?

HON. MR. HARDY: — Mr. Speaker, I'm not quite sure what the question was there. It seemed to be along statement and not much of a question. I really don't know if there's an answer to that type of a question, so I guess I couldn't make any comment on it.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Well, let me just try once again. Mr. Hunchuk said that his province reminds him of how his grandfather used to describe the Ukraine. I ask you: what is it you have to fear? You've got this majority. You've got the reins of power. What are you afraid of?

HON. MR. HARDY: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Hunchuk can say whatever he wants. We have nothing to fear.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I will direct this question to the minister in charge of the public service commission. As I understand the position of the government with respect to the Van Mulligen issue, Mr. Van Mulligen took the position that before city council he should refrain from participating in discussion and vote on matters wherein there might be a conflict of interest. As I understand it, the Premier has said that the position of their government is that certain employees, at least, are to regard all government matters as within their purview so that they must declare a conflict of interest with respect to all government matters of major importance. As I understand it, what he had said was that the proper course of action for the alderman in question was to declare a conflict of interest and not to vote.

The question I put to the minister is this: Alderman Cholod did not withdraw from the discussion. He, in fact, voted on the issue. Alderman Cholod is not being disciplined. Is Alderman Cholod not being disciplined because his position as a public relations officer for Sask Tel is less sensitive than Mr. Van Mulligen's position as an information officer for SaskHousing, or is it because Alderman Cholod agreed with the government and didn't disagree with the government, as did Alderman Van Mulligen?

HON. MR. ANDREW: — Mr. Speaker, I was not aware of what Mr. Cholod did with the government. I think the other analogy perhaps is that of one Mr. Oxelgren, who also sits on the council, who took exactly the same position as did Mr. Van Mulligen. I think what the Premier indicated yesterday is it's a question of what type of function you are in fact doing and whether he breached that particular position. I think the analogy is between Mr. Oxelgren and Mr. Van Mulligen, and I think completely different actions were taken with regard to those two employees.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Supplementary question. It seems to me the analogy is between a public relations officer and an information officer. It strikes me that a public relations officer would have an equal degree of sensitivity, or greater. And yet the government took a totally different view because Alderman Cholod voted with the government. Is the minister prepared to admit that Alderman Van Mulligen's basic sin was not that he was in a sensitive position but rather that he voted against the government policy?

HON. MR. ANDREW: — No, that's not true at all, Mr. Speaker. I think the position advanced by the Premier yesterday made it very clear and I don't wish to go over that particular ground. With regards to that whole question was the matter of degree, what position he held, how he approached that particular position with it. The analogy as I say is between Mr. Van Mulligen and Mr. Oxelgren. If you were to follow your argument of anybody that voted against a policy of the government then what we would have been doing is transferring not only Van Mulligen but also Oxelgren. I don't think you've seen that happen. I think that takes apart your whole argument.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Am I to understand then that had Alderman Oxelgren voted with the government policy he would equally have been transferred to Prince Albert because he equally would have transgressed your rule of participating in something on this issue, participating in the discussion on a matter of major government policy, which is the thing that you say he should not do? Am I to believe that had Alderman Van Mulligen supported the government guidelines he would have been transferred to Prince Albert?

HON. MR. ANDREW: — Mr. Speaker, I think the question is that you look at one particular individual, I don't think any point in time. I think the argument of the members opposite was that Mr. Van Mulligen was transferred to Prince Albert for only one reason, and that was his particular action. I don't suggest that that's the whole reason. I think that is the question that is obviously going to be seen when the court process takes place. And that's why I think it's only proper that we defer the answers to that question until it comes to the court. Because when the court is dealing with the situation, they're dealing with one individual and they're dealing with the way it was particularly handled.

New Regulations re: Access to Legislative Building

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Government Services. Last Thursday the minister informed me that she would be sending me a copy of the new regulations which apply to demonstrations and people visiting this Assembly. I have not yet received those regulations, and I'm wondering when and if she still intends to send them to me.

HON. MRS. DUNCAN: — You'll get it in due course. About the same speed that you people used to provide us with information when we asked for it in opposition.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting that when I phoned the office of the Minister of Government Services last Thursday, she knew very well where the regulations were, and she informed me at that time she would get them right to me. What I would like to know is why the minister cannot simply rip them out of her information books she has in front of her, or if she'll give me the guarantee that if I come to her office after this session, she'll have that information for me.

HON. MRS. DUNCAN: — You'll get them in due course. And for the information of the member, I won't be in my office after 3 o'clock.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, a new question to the minister. In that same line of questions, on Thursday the question of police in the Legislative Building was brought up. What I'd like to know from the minister is which police were involved whether it was the city police or the Wascana police in crown control that day?

HON. MRS. DUNCAN: — It was Wascana police. And, Mr. Speaker, I might say that that is not a sudden deviation from the normal course of action when a demonstration comes to the legislature. Even under the former administration, Wascana police were always present when demonstrators were in the building.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I can well wonder at the statement by the minister that on every occasion that groups came to the building under a former government, the Wascana police were involved. What I'd like to know is whether the minister can inform me who made the decision to call the Wascana police in, whether it was the minister or someone in the department.

HON. MRS. DUNCAN: — Mr. Speaker, it is standard procedure for the Wascana police to be present when a demonstration is taking place at the legislature, whether or not they are outside on the steps or whether they are inside the building. There are usually at least two uniformed Wascana police present. Unlike the former administration, we have never called in the RCM Police, as they did during an anti-nuke demonstration. We had plain-clothes RCM Police sitting in the galleries at the invitation of the former government.

Possible Layoffs at Big River and Carrot River Sawmills

MR. THOMPSON: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I direct my question to the minister in charge of the Saskatchewan Forest Products Corporation. It has come to my attention that there is going to be a major layoff at the Big River sawmill, which is situated in Bodmin. I wonder if the minister at this time could inform the House if indeed there will be a layoff in the mill at Big River and how many employees will be affected and when

this layoff will take place?

HON. MR. HARDY: — Mr. Speaker, in answer to the hon. member, there has been an anticipated layoff in Big River. They had been sent out the regular seven weeks notice. We have had the MLA from the area go up to meet with the people there to see what would, in fact, create the very least hardship for them. It was anticipated to be six weeks but it now in fact may be less if it will create a hardship. As you well know, the lumber industry is certainly in a poor condition. We're trying to keep these people working, to the best of our ability, with the very least of inconvenience and we're discussing with these people right now, and have been, what we can in fact do to alleviate their problems.

MR. THOMPSON: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Could you indicate to the House when you anticipate this layoff and how many employees will be involved?

HON. MR. HARDY: — Mr. Speaker, it's scheduled for right after the Christmas break in January till the middle of February, but as I indicated a few moments ago, we are looking into it to see if that will create a hardship. If it will, we're willing to scatter it over a period of time. As you full realize, most mills, not only in Saskatchewan but across Canada, are down and we feel an obligation to try to keep this running as much as possible, fully realizing that the price of lumber is nowhere near the economic cost.

MR. THOMPSON: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Could you indicate to this House if this is going to affect the bush operations that are delivering the raw material to the Big River sawmill?

HON. MR. HARDY: — Mr. Speaker, to my knowledge there will be a full cut in the bush this winter.

MR. THOMPSON: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is once again to the minister in charge of Saskatchewan Forest Products. Could you indicate to the House whether there are any planned layoffs for the Carrot River sawmill?

HON. MR. HARDY: — No, Mr. Speaker, at the present time we don't anticipate a layoff there. The reason we wouldn't have a layoff there is because during the winter months they do the sawing so the planer can operate during the summer. If we shut it down during the winter months, then the planer would have to be down during the summer at which time it does operate. So if there's a layoff, it would come later in the fall.

MR. THOMPSON: — Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Then will you give your assurance to this House and to the people in Big River and Carrot River that the layoffs planned for the forest operation will not involve the bush operations in Big River that supply the material for the Big River sawmill, the bush operations that are supplying the raw material for Carrot River? There will be absolutely no slowdown? Would you give your assurance to the House at this time that that is going to take place?

HON. MR. HARDY: — Mr. Speaker, in answer to that, like I say, their full contract cut has been issued for the winter months, and as far as I know there will be no cutback in any of the contracts for the winter months.

Transfer of Harry Van Mulligen

MR. SHILLINGTON: — I have a question to the minister in charge of the Saskatchewan

Housing Corporation. Three times on Friday I asked you why Mr. Van Mulligen was transferred. Three times you told me it was because you thought he was a New Democrat. Is that still your position?

HON. MR. HARDY: — I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, I didn't hear the last part of the question.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — I don't doubt that you didn't. There is so much bellowing going on from the members opposite that I can hardly hear it myself.

My question was: I asked you three times on Friday why Mr. Van Mulligen was transferred; three times you said it was because you thought he was New Democrat. You repeated that comment outside of the House; I heard it on TV. Is that still your position or are you running for cover?

HON. MR. HARDY: — Well, Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned a few minutes ago, it's before the courts. I was looking through some of the things that Mr. Shillington has said here, and I would like to make a comment on it, but I won't due to the sensitivity of it. But at the same time, no, it's before the courts and I think it is not relevant for me to say anything.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the minister in charge of the public service commission. This concerns Alderman Van Mulligen, but you can insert another name if you wish. Alderman Van Mulligen is a member of the Saskatchewan Government Employees' Union and a member of the Regina City Council. We have heard the Premier say that he is not to utter in public statements in opposition to fundamental government policy. My question is this: if Alderman Van Mulligen attends a meeting of his union, the Saskatchewan Government Employees' Union, at which the press are in attendance, is he prevented from expressing his opposition to the government's wage control guidelines at that union meeting, as he rather clearly is at the Regina City Council meeting?

HON. MR. ANDREW: — Mr. Speaker, I think, to carry on with the logic of the member's question, if anybody in the SGE Union, and there are lots of them, is to speak out against the program . . . Have we terminated or transferred any of the 28,000 people within SGEU? No, we haven't. We dealt with one particular man; that question is now before the courts for simply doing that. So I don't think you can make a whole lot that we are going to be critical of people within SGEU. We have dealt with SGEU as you dealt with SGEU. Obviously, SGEU is going to take an employee-management relationship with the government. That's exactly what they're doing now; I think we will handle that in the proper way. Clearly you are trying to put the issue onto one individual. That question is before the courts, and you, as a lawyer I think would agree with us that it is inappropriate to be dealing with that particular question when the matter is before the courts.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, a new question to the minister in charge of the public service commission. What we are trying to get, and I think properly trying to get, is a statement of the government policy with respect to employees in sensitive positions, so-called, who make public statements in opposition to fundamental government policy, so-called. A question directed to that is a general question, and I suggest, a question totally in order. My question to you is: if a member of the Saskatchewan Government Employee's Union goes to his union meeting at which the press happen to be in attendance and expresses views which are in opposition to some "fundamental government policy" and if that employee is in a "sensitive positive," is he subject to transfer or other threat to his job?

HON. MR. ANDREW: — Mr. Speaker, I think in response to that question the Minister of the Environment indicated that the Premier would be making statements in the future with regard to that policy.

But I think it's not a policy exclusive to the province of Saskatchewan. I read in the *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix* of yesterday of yesterday the same type of situation. Two people were fired for criticizing the Manitoba housing program, one of them being a casual laborer, a person who had been there for six months. They criticized the way the program had come in and they were fired accordingly. Obviously, this is not a problem that is based only the province of Saskatchewan.

I think you, as a former premier of this province, recognize the gray area dealing with the whole question of guidelines as to what people can do and what people can't do. I think the Premier made reference to that yesterday. I think he did it very well. There is a fine line, and that fine line becomes a delicate question. What he is going to attempt to do is make a statement with regard to how we try to define those particular rules and those particular guidelines.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Do you not think it would have been fairer to have promulgated that policy before you transferred Mr. Van Mulligen? I guess we must address these to the ministers by names, and the question is the Minister of Finance. Do you not think, as suggested by the editorial in the *Leader-Post*, that it would have been a fairer to have announced that policy before this vindictive transfer to Prince Albert?

HON. MR. ANDREW: — Mr. Speaker, we will be announcing the particular guidelines or the attempt to try to define those. It is a very difficult area. I suppose until such time as the Premier addresses that particular question. I don't see any other way to answer the question of the hon. member with regard to when particular policies should be brought in. The only thing I can say, Mr. Speaker, is that we have been in office for seven months now; we as a government believe that in that short period of seven months we have accomplished quite a few things. We have delivered our program, Mr. Speaker, which we promised during the election campaign . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! I think the member is stretching a rather long bow.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, in an attempt to get some idea of what the government's policy is in this regard, pending the promulgation of a set of rules, and I hope prior to other employees being disciplined, I direct a question to the Minister of Health. I ask him whether the position of director of the education division of the alcoholism commission is such a sensitive position that the occupant of that position shall refrain from discussing all matters pertaining to the provincial government at city council meetings? The position again is director of the education division of the alcoholism commission.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Speaker, I don't know who you are referring to here in city council. The assistant director of the alcoholism commission did you say?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — The director of the education division.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — I don't know if that individual sits on city council at all in Regina, Saskatoon or where he may be. I couldn't reply to that. I don't know who you refer to, and who occupies that position at all.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order. I would like to read to the Leader of the Opposition one clause out of section 359(3):

The question ought to seek information and, therefore, cannot be based upon a hypothesis, cannot seek an opinion, either legal or otherwise, and must not suggest its own answer, be argumentative or make representations

I think your questions tend to be seeking that type of information, and I suggest you change the direction of them.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. I will direct a question to the Minister of Health and it concerns a Mr. Kleisinger. He is Alderman Kleisinger, and he is the director of the education division of the alcoholism commission. The question I ask is: is that position sensitive, as that term has been defined by the Premier and the minister in charge of the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation, so that Alderman Kleisinger must withdraw from discussions in city council, or is that not sensitive? I think that's a fair question to direct to you, because it's of interest to citizens of Regina, who want to know whether their alderman represents them, or the Government of Saskatchewan.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Well, in answer to that (and as the Speaker has indicated, I do think it still verges on a hypothetical question), I would have to see what statements Alderman Kleisinger made. If he made statements that were directly in opposition to the policies of the alcohol commission, one would have to take that under consideration, but until he has said something, I'm not going to come out and tell you whether I think he would prejudicing his position or not. I don't think that would be fair. That's hypothetical. If the man is going to do this . . . I would think Mr. Kleisinger has that type of discretion, that we will not see that type of situation arise again.

I have faith in the employees of the Department of Health, that they will carry out the mandate of the Department of Health, or the department of the alcohol commission.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MOTION UNDER RULE 16

Rail Freight Rates

MR. ENGEL: — Mr. Speaker, the western grain industry is at a critical juncture in its history. Proposed changes to the grain transportation system, as announced by the Minister of Transport, the Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin, and followed up in a report of Dr. Clay Gilson, would have a disastrous effect on the future well-being of western Canadian agriculture.

The moment of decision is approaching very rapidly. This makes it critical that there be a clear indication as to where this legislature and the Government of Saskatchewan stand on the major issue before us today.

The resolution before the House, Mr. Speaker, addresses the issue of method of payment for federal contributions to grain transportation. This matter has been described by the president of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, Mr. E.K. Turner, as a

vitaly important element in the current debate.

This question, Mr. Speaker, has to be considered in the context of the total picture. What are the major elements of this picture?

1. I would like to suggest that there is strong opposition in western Canada to the proposed changes to the crow rate announced last February. This, however, has been offset in part by a disturbing and noisy effort by certain farm groups, who want to see the crow rate eliminated.
2. Recent considerable opposition to the crow rate changes has emerged in other parts of Canada; particularly farmers in both Ontario and Quebec and the Quebec legislature have voiced their opposition.
3. The federal government is prepared to allocate a significant amount of money to grain transportation. The question is: how should this money be handled? Should it go to the railways or the producer?
4. In filling out the premise of this picture, Mr. Speaker, Gilson tried to give the appearance of a compromise, but in fact the long-term effect of his proposal still leaves the producer exposed and vulnerable. This question is critical, Mr. Speaker, because of the necessity to protect the farmer from exposure to higher transportation costs in the future.

This time has come, Mr. Speaker, when the Saskatchewan legislature and the members sitting across from the government need to say where they stand. Members of this Assembly recently received a letter from Mr. Turner, president of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, on that matter. He urged the members of this Assembly to take a strong position in support of payment to the railways. He also drew attention to the results of survey of pool members during the busy harvest season where 90 per cent of the replies opposed the Gilson proposal on method as of payment. He made his organization's continued opposition to the Gilson proposal crystal clear: they would challenge anyone that comes out in support of it. He asked for our support on this issue and noted that this support may be the key in determining the final decision.

Where does the thing stand now, Mr. Speaker, on this question? Where, so far as this legislature and the Government of Saskatchewan is concerned? On June 28, 1982, the day on which the Gilson report was released, the Leader of the Opposition requested a priority of debate to discuss this report. Subsequently, I had the opportunity move a motion which, first of all, affirmed the support of this Assembly for the fundamental principles of the statutory crow rate including a rate for producers fixed in law. In addition, Mr. Speaker, you will recall that the motion also asked for the payment of any revenue shortfall by the federal government to the railways, and for equal rate for equal distance. The motion also rejected the virtual elimination of payments to railways by 1990.

What happened in this debate, Mr. Speaker? There was a positive and constructive discussion which was launched by the Leader of the Opposition and followed up by other speakers. After I had moved my motion, the Minister of Agriculture decided he would dissect the motion in most peculiar way. He indicated there were a lot of good things in the motion, including a fixed rate in law, payment of revenue shortfall by the federal government, equal rate for equal distance, and so on. But because he didn't like a proposal for public hearings, he moved an amendment and this amendment is

something that is worth noting, Mr. Speaker. Everything from the motion, except for the first statement concerning the statutory crow rate was removed . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . If the member (he's not a minister yet; he'd like to be I know) had been listening he would now it was a special debate we had the day the Gilson report came down. The end result is that the only expression of view to date by this legislature on a resolution which states that this Assembly affirms its support for the fundamental principles of the statutory crow rate has had everything else in that resolution deleted by the Minister of Agriculture's amendment.

The time is overdue for this Assembly to go beyond this elementary stage and state where it stands on some of the particular issues that need to be addressed if we are to retain the fundamental principles of the statutory crow rate. The method of payment issue is the prime key in this regard.

The Minister of Agriculture talked about this issue when he addressed the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool Convention in November. He said farmers themselves must decide whether federal contributions to grain transportation costs should be paid to producers or the railways.

He admitted both the cabinet and the Conservative caucus were split on this issue. But he wouldn't say where he stood. He did the same thing again at the National Farmers' Union convention last week. I submit, Mr. Speaker, that farmers have said where they stood. Now they want to know where we stand and where the government stands. Unfortunately, the decision on this matter will not be made by farmers. Contrary to what the minister has said, the federal government will decide. It is vital that farmers, this legislature and the government make their stand known. Farmers have spoken loud and clear, Mr. Speaker.

Now it is time for us to speak up. Why is this issue so important? The Saskatchewan Wheat Pool has itemized its key concerns about acreage payments. If you read your literature you will find:

1. The subsidy would be recognized by politicians and the general public as a producer rather than a transportation subsidy, thus the permanency of it would doubtful.
2. If only a small portion of the railway revenue shortfall is paid directly to the railway by the government, the necessary leverage to enforce performance is weakened significantly.
3. If producers are charged compensatory rates with a partial offset through acreage payments, there is a greater possibility of variable rates being introduced.

4. Acreage payments would be a disincentive to increase production and better management practices.
5. The administration of producer subsidies through acreage payments would be complex and costly.
6. There will be a significant transfer of benefit from grain producers to producer of other agriculture commodities.

On the other hand, the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool points out the following benefits of making federal payments directly to the railways:

1. It will permit the railway revenue shortfall to be paid by the federal government directly and therefore be treated properly as a transportation subsidy.
2. Direct payments to the railways by the federal government offer greater assurance to grain producers that performance guarantees will be effective.
3. The direct payment option is more acceptable politically in both western and eastern Canada, since it is then clearly a national policy addressing a regional transportation need.
4. Administration is direct, simple and less costly to the Canadian public.

For these reasons, Mr. Speaker, I hope that this legislature gives my motion unanimous approval. I know that there is no mandatory reason to vote on the motion, but I think in this case, when so many people are anxious to know where the government stands that I would like to see a vote on this resolution.

I move, seconded by the member for Shaunavon, under rule 16 that this Assembly approve the following motion:

That is the current debate in Canada respecting rail freight rates on grain, this House supports the position that Government of Canada payments should continue to go to the railway companies as a transportation subsidy for the western Canadian rail system.

MR. PETERSEN: — Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the members of the opposition would agree with me when I say there is currently two primary areas of importance regarding transportation. One is the statutory grain rates, commonly called the crow rates, and the second is the capacity of the western rail system. I really can't understand why the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg is suddenly so interested in railroads. He hasn't done much in that regard for the past several years . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . He has a toy train in his basement. Oh, I see.

I'd like to quote from *Hansard* on page 1129, November 29, 1982. In response to an interjection from an hon. member, the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg said:

Where was I? It's a tragedy, Mr. Speaker, that the Devine government has roared like a mouse on grain transportation issues. They have said as little as they could as softly as they could . . . Somebody mentioned the rail line

abandonment meetings in Coronach.

Well I beg to inform the hon. member there were no rail line abandonment meetings in Coronach. They were in Rockglen. No wonder he didn't know where he was.

Let me just touch on them for a minute. I presented briefs to the Canadian Transport Commission at the hearings in Rockglen . . .

Now he realizes where he's at.

. . . on two proposed abandonments. One of those abandonments. One of those abandonments included Big Beaver, which is represented (and I'm glad the minister is here) by the Minister of Rural Affairs. Where was he? Where was he? He wasn't at Rockglen. And I was shocked, Mr. Speaker, because I expected him to present how much it's going to cost the rural municipalities to maintain their roads if those lines are abandoned.

That is a cheap shot. Really a cheap shot. I was at the hearings at Rockglen. I was at those hearings. The week previous to those hearings I had been in my own constituency of Kelvington-Wadena at rail abandonments at Kelvington. Where was that hon. member as I was fighting to save the rail line in my constituency? Where was he? Where was he?

He goes on in derogatory manner, and again I quote after an inaudible interjection:

They sure did. The presentation that your guys made . . . The commission asked, "Why didn't you read your mail in October when we abandoned the very premise of the argument?" They said, "Don't move on these rail lines because we'll wait and see what's going to happen with the crow debate and then you'll make lots of money and you won't need to abandon the lines." That was their argument. Exactly! I'd like to read a letter into the record that I got from a fellow that some of your members . . . If you Attorney General and your Minister of Energy were here, they'd recognize the name of the writer of this letter. And he wrote me . . .

And he goes on to quote the letter that was written to him. Well, for the hon. member's information I too received a letter from that same person. In it, it states:

Dear Sherwin: The Big Bear Rail Retention Committee have asked me to thank you for your help at our hearing in Rockglen yesterday. They were very impressed with your work and the way you handled yourself. Again, we thank you. Sincerely, Elmer Meek, Secretary Big Beaver Rail Retention Committee.

He goes on with a postscript:

By the way, we find out this morning that the Killdeer line will be kept in service for five years.

Mr. Speaker, we went down there and we saved that rail line for them. We saved that rail line.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. PETERSEN: — I have been a member of this House since April 26. I have taken an active interest in rail line abandonments, primarily because there was some scheduled for my area. Where were the members opposite when the Wishart line was lost in my constituency? Where were they? Did any of them come up there to help my people then? No way! No bloody way! They tend to want to sit down here and poke fun at one another and now they're talking about what we haven't done. We've done a darned sight more than they ever did. We've gone down to that area and we've saved a rail line. And we saved it on the very premise that they laughed at, under section 254(5), the section of the Railway Act which pertains to the Saskatchewan position in which the CTC (Canadian Transportation Commission) is allowed to take advantage of the Railway Act in such a manner as to allow it to order rail line to be retained for up to five years. We presented that point at that hearing and the commission agreed with our position. The hon. member did not. I find that rather amusing. And after all that time that the member has had, and I am speaking of the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg at this time, after all the time that he has had realizing that abandonment hearings were about to go on in this area, what did he come with — a few facts and a half-dozen pages of rhetoric. Terrible.

Well, let me get back now to the other part that is very important in the grain transportation area, the statutory rates. Section 271 of the federal Railway Act presently contains a statutory provision regarding the level of all freight rates, commonly called the Crow's Nest Pass rates. On February 8, 1982, the Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin, Minister of Transport, initiated a consultative process between the agricultural organization and the railways to address in a comprehensive manner western grain transportation, and, in particular, the cost of grain transportation the future responsibility for paying grain transport cost in the new legislative framework to be developed.

The Gilson report, including 13 recommendations, was released on June 28, 1982 as a part of that process. Saskatchewan's reaction to that report was immediately to send a Telex to Mr. Pepin outlining the province's position on the crow, which is the crow benefit should remain and that the federal government be responsible for paying the revenue shortfall, and that we would oppose any plan arising out of the Gilson report which does not clearly protect the producers.

The crow rate recognized this essential measure of protection and this protection is necessary today. The logic behind the Saskatchewan proposition that the federal government be responsible for paying the revenue shortfall is straightforward. Grain exports are very valuable and important to Canada and our balance of payments. Increases in grain production and exports would make the grain industry more valuable to the country. As a renewable resource the long-term benefit to Canada would not diminish.

Those receiving the benefits should continue to share in the cost of ensuring that the benefits continue to be received at an accelerated rate.

MR. ENGEL: — Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I've been listening and I enjoyed the member talking about me for five minutes and on this debate. But this resolution is specific on one topic and that is who does the compensation go to: farmers or railways? The member hasn't mentioned that topic yet in seven minutes of his time. I don't think he's on this particular resolution. If he has moved an amendment, okay, but my point of order is that he is not discussing the same resolution we moved today.

MR. SPEAKER: -- Under rule 16, it is a very narrow item of debate and I would ask that the member relate his remarks to the item that is before the Assembly.

MR. PETERSEN: — Mr. Speaker, I've done my homework, thank you very kindly. In response to the outcry from the member opposite I would, therefore, like to submit an amendment to his motion, if I may. I move that the motion be amended by striking out all the worlds after the words "the position that" and by substituting therefor the following:

The producers of this province should not have to pay more to transport grain; that the crow benefit remain statutory; and that the method of payment reflect the wishes of the producers.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. PETERSEN: — It was moved by myself and seconded by the member for Shellbrook-Torch River.

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. I'm very pleased to get into this debate. I would like to say that the member for Kelvington-Wadena a few minutes ago spoke on just about everything but the statutory rate, and the movement of grain and who pays and who receives the subsidy. He also has an amendment that I don't have before me now, but I would like to say a few words on the resolution that was passed by my colleague, the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg — or moved by the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg.

Mr. Speaker, as was mentioned by the member for Kelvington-Wadena, the statutory rate, more commonly known as the crowrate, is something that the farmers have been getting for a long time, have been used to operating under, and have budgeted themselves by. I think it is very crucial at this time that these farmers continue to receive the benefit of the crowrate. If the federal government feels that there should be a subsidy paid, then what we are saying is that that subsidy should be going to the railway because that subsidy is not something that the farmer is getting now. The movement of grain is a benefit to all of Canada, and if it's a benefit to all of Canada, then those subsidies should be paid by Canada.

The member for Kelvington-Wadena was talking about rail line abandonment and everything else you could think of, leaving out a very important issue: the issue of the crowrate. Where does the present government stand on the crow? What have we heard from this government since last spring? I think we would have to say that in April, before the election, we heard a lot about the crow from the members opposite. We heard them say that they are all for the statutory rate, that it should remain in place, and that farmers should not have to pay more. They said that we stand shoulder to shoulder with the NDP. "Trust us," they say. "When we get elected we will not do anything to the crow."

When we said that we support the crowrate fully and the statutory rate . . . (inaudible interjections) . . . Yes, Mr. Speaker, last spring the members opposite, when they were in opposition, did say that they supported the NDP in their stand on the crow. But now they seem to be saying that they don't support it any longer, and that, Mr. Speaker, is understandable. I can see that they don't support it any longer because when you look at the actions coming from the government, they do not support the crowrate any more. What have they done since April? They sent one telegram to the minister in Ottawa, the Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin — one telegram asking him to keep the crowrate in place. And it doesn't appear that the minister in Ottawa even read that telegram

because there have been very few comments since.

But that is the position taken by the members opposite, Mr. Speaker. They support the amendment of the question when they feel it is to their advantage. And then if it appears that maybe there is pressure a bit greater from elsewhere, they start to move in the other direction. And I would say, Mr. Speaker, that if the farmers have friends like the members opposite, who needs enemies

And why has so little been done by the members opposite regarding the crowrate or the statutory rate, Mr. Speaker, and who should be receiving the subsidies? I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that maybe it's because they are so closely aligned with some of their free enterprise grain companies that are out there today. We have members opposite who are members of the Palliser Wheat Growers' Association. The Palliser wheat growers have continuously advocated the removal of the statutory rate and that is the position, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the members opposite are taking. That is their position. And I think their lack of action proves that, Mr. Speaker, it proves how little commitment this government really has to supporting the farmers and maintaining a statutory rate that they have enjoyed for many, many years and one which they should get as a major producer of food in this country.

This government has had the opportunity to join with the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool with the Manitoba Wheat Pool, the Alberta Wheat Pool, Unifarm from Alberta and even the SFA. They say that the statutory rate should stay in place and any subsidies that should be paid should be paid directly to the railways. That, Mr. Speaker, is the position of most of the large farm organizations in Western Canada. That is the position of the NDP and I would say, Mr. Speaker, that should be the position of the present government. But that does not appear to be the case.

The commitment of this government appears to be little more than just words, Mr. Speaker. Words that say they will support whatever seems to be popular out there and do nothing about it. And when the issue is brought up, they would prefer to speak on something else, something other than what is on a motion or something other than what is very important to the farmers of Saskatchewan. That, Mr. Speaker, is the kind of commitment that this government has taken regarding the crowrate or who the subsidy should be paid to.

I continue to say, Mr. Speaker, that we should all be out there supporting the farmers and saying that the statutory rate, the subsidy should be paid to the railways. There should be no further discussions on it, and the federal government should then make sure there is a commitment by the railways to provide the transportation that is required for grain.

As a government in the past, the NDP have held to that position. We have tried to assist the movement of grain by purchasing hopper cars. Now that was a commitment to the farmers of Saskatchewan: that was a cost the farmers of Saskatchewan did not have to bear. And that is a cost the government should bear, much as the statutory rate and the subsidy that is being proposed. It should be going to the railways and assuring that they make that firm commitment to provide that service.

I personally do feel that is not for the provincial governments to have to supply the rolling stock for railways. They receive subsidies to the tune of what they have received over the years, and if it requires more, if the federal government feels they do require

more, then they can make that decision and play that subsidy to the railways. The farmer would be assured that his grain will get to market, and the hungry people of this world could be assured that they will receive the food the farmer is committed to producing.

Mr. Speaker, it is very obvious that we will not see that kind of support coming from the members opposite. One good reason for that would be that a motion, a good motion

MR. SPEAKER: -- Order. Your time has expired. Under rule 16 I have to call time.

MR. DOMOTOR: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend my colleague the member for Kelvington-Wadena on his amendment.

I have been listening to the crowing from the members opposite with respect to the crowrates. They're talking about the railway being held over in Rockglen. Well, that is part and parcel of the crowrate. If you keep the railways then you also have an effect on the crowrate. We continue to debate in this house as to where we should be on the crowrate. Where was the opposition before, when it was the government? Why did it not go ahead and convince the East? They spent lots of money, and I will show later on how they spent the money in Saskatchewan trying to convince the producers here. Why didn't they spend that kind of money trying to convince the East?

Let's look at another statement. What did Blakeney say, by the way? When Blakeney was on the campaign trail before, he also stated that there would be an inevitable increase. Over the years what have the NDP done? They have had about seven or eight years since the Snively report came out. Did they change it? Did they convince Otto Lang? Did they convince Pepin? They brought some rolling stock, then they were going to go ahead and buy into the CPR, at the cost of how much? Is that part of the crowrate?

What about the federal government? When we had Mazankowski as transport minister, we had a good opportunity to resolve this issue. But what happened? The members opposite and their colleagues in Ottawa voted against that government and sent them out.

There are too many inherent costs today for the farmer to be able to pay more for the crowrate. Let's take a look at the news report from the Saskatchewan Federation of Agriculture. Farms consume about 3 per cent of Canada's energy. The total food system is valued at approximately 15 per cent. The 1981 prairie crop sales, approximately \$6.4 billion with wheat sales, these are wheat sales, and \$4.2 billion in barley sales, \$882 million in barley, and oil seeds sales of \$713 million. Now, what do the farmers spend in return? On goods and services they pay taxes and wages of \$5.6 billion. These expenditures include the \$1.3 billion for machinery repairs, fuel, \$1.1 billion in interest, \$638 million for fertilizer, \$268 million in wages and \$133 million in taxes. Now this is a sizable amount, Mr. Speaker, that the farmer has put into this country. The cash receipts reflect approximately 44 per cent and livestock approximately 55 per cent.

The food and beverage industry is Canada's largest manufacturing industry and Canadians spend about 18 per cent of their personal disposable income on food and non-alcoholic beverages, second in the world only to the U.S. One-third of the food dollar is spent on meat, poultry and fish. Consider the fact that the producer pays for and supports several industries in this country. Take the businessman, the oil

companies and manufacturing industries that are helped by the producers in this country, who in effect give jobs to many individuals, not only in this province but in the whole country.

Let's take a look at the federal government's subsidy programs that it so readily hands out. Money is quickly found for such companies as Dome, Massey-Ferguson, Chrysler and other large corporations. What I would like to ask is: why then can't they go ahead and assist the prairie producer with the crow benefit? Agriculture is a prime benefit to the federal budget, and as a result they should be willing to continue the crow benefit. Farmers cannot afford to pay more to transport grain in this country. We in Saskatchewan are landlocked and have the furthest distance to move our grain. If this crow benefit were to be taken away the only loser would be the producer. But falling grain prices and rising costs in energy, chemicals and statutory rate is something that we cannot do away with now.

On June 29, for the members opposite to get their information straight, our extremely capable and illustrious Minister of Agriculture approached Mr. Pepin to confirm his views to him. And I would just like to read a few excerpts here on June 29. I quote:

Farmers are faced with rising costs of productions, falling grain prices and therefore cannot afford further cost increases.

He told Pepin. He said the recommendations to have the farmers share inflationary costs increases with the federal government up to a maximum of 4.5 per cent isn't the best incentive to increase grain production. Berntson said the railways and the federal government are better able than the farmers to pay the increases. What do you call that, if that's not defending the crow and statutory rate? These are direct statements to the federal Minister of Transport trying to emphasize to him that we as farmers cannot absorb any additional costs in marketing our grain.

Let's take a look at the grain prices. For example, from Humboldt to Thunder Bay it costs approximately 21 cents per hundredweight to 12.6 cents per bushel. From Rose Valley, my neighbor for Kelvington-Wadena's area, it costs approximately 12 cents per bushel. Now if this increase were to go to approximately six times, then the increased cost would probably be about approximately 75.6 cents or it could rise up to a dollar. And therefore, they cannot afford to pay this extra additional cost.

Let's refer to the argument that members opposite tried to promote to fight for the crow so much.

Thursday, March 11, 1982, the *Leader-Post*. Let me quote a few pages relating to the cost of production and that previous government preaching to the converted:

Government Announces Cost of Campaign Against Rate Changes. The Saskatchewan government spent \$77,029 in the first month of its campaign against federal proposals for reform of grain freight rates, according to figures released Wednesday by the crow office. (And this is mostly spent within Saskatchewan.) The biggest cost so far is an estimated \$48,000 for 220,000 glossy pamphlets outlining the provincial government's position, \$36,000 for production and printing, and \$12,000 for mailing to homes in rural Saskatchewan.

You would have been better off to mail that to homes in Ontario, down east. That's

where you have to convince them. The people in Saskatchewan, the rural community are familiar with the crow rate and they know that you have to keep the statutory rate. To convince these people is not necessary. You could have spent that money better down east.

The production and printing of 22,000 post cards distributed at the rural meetings cost \$349. The farmers were urged to mail the post cards to federal transport minister Jean-Luc Pepin to protest his proposal for crow reform. Finally, the government has a bill for \$10,180 for hall rental, a slide presentation, and other costs associated with the 16 rural meetings. The figure doesn't include travel expenses for MacMurchy and others who had attended the rural meetings and other crow-related functions. But Aldridge said that this would just likely be considered part of their normal work anyway.

Now, the money that was spent in Saskatchewan when the members opposite were in power could very well have been spent down east, putting a total campaign together and we wouldn't be caught in the pickle that we are today.

To emphasize how our government responded to the crowrate, the member opposite should refer to the information released on June 28. This is a Telex from the Saskatchewan agriculture minister, Eric Berntson.

I have received a copy of Dr. Gilson's report this morning. On behalf of the government of Saskatchewan, I wish to express my opposition (Do you know what opposition means?) to any plan arising out of this report, which does not clearly protect producers. (Protect producers means protect them.) The Crown's Nest Pass agreement recognized this essential measure of protection for farmers and the historic argument remains valid today. Farmers are faced with rising costs of production, falling grain prices, and therefore cannot afford further cost increases.

I ask the members opposite: what more can the Minister of Agriculture do? He has presented a petition to the minister, Pepin. He goes on:

Farm production costs are already higher than they need to be due to exorbitant interest rates and the 55 per cent per gallon federal tax on farm fuels.

He goes on to relate about the capital gains tax that the federal government has initiated. Further, on June 28, 1982, the news release:

It is the Saskatchewan government's position that the crowrate should remain unchanged, and that the federal government should be responsible for paying any crown shortfall. The Gilson recommendation would have the maximum share inflation with the federal government up to a maximum of 4.5 per cent, and would have the farmers pay all the costs of transporting future volumes about 30 million tons. I question whether that is the best incentive to increase grain production.

What more do members opposite require to show what this government has done?

MR. SPEAKER: — Order. I must advise the member that his time has expired.

MR. KOSKIE: — I just want to say, Mr. Speaker, I look at the resolution and it zeros in on a particular issue, and the issue is that in the current debate in Canada respecting rail

freight rates on grain, this House supports the position that Government of Canada payments should continue to go to the railway companies as a transportation subsidy.

I want to say that an amendment was moved, and what is reflected in the amendment. It says that the method of payment reflect the wishes of the producers.

What I ask in this House is not the wishes of the producers, represented, as my colleague indicated, by the position of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, the Alberta Wheat Pool, the Manitoba Wheat Pool, Unifarm of Alberta, and the Saskatchewan Federation of Agriculture. I want to say that here is an opportunity for members to take a stand. I want to say that the members opposite have again reneged on taking a stand. I want to say that the particular motion here, and the emphasis of this motion, is being led by the wheat pools. In the recent information that has been provided to all members, the wheat pool solicited, sent out a survey — 70,000 members received surveys. Approximately 30 per cent of the almost 70,000 survey sheets mailed to our members were returned, and the results that the wheat pool found were that 90 per cent indicated their strong opposition to the Gilson recommendation and came straight forward. In fact, 82 per cent favored the pool proposal, and I want to say, 10 per cent favored the Gilson report.

The overwhelming position that the producers have taken is in fact that payments should be made directly to the railways, and I want to say that no one single member on the opposition side has joined with the wheat pools across this country, joined in their stand. They refuse to do it. There is a choice here. The choice that you have is whether or not you are going to stand up and support the farmers and the farming wheat pools, or whether you are going to side with the CPR.

I want to say that the members opposite have left their opposition open because obviously he who pays the piper calls the tune, and there's no doubt which side the Tory party will come down on, if it's a choice between the producers of this province and the mighty CPR, their friend.

Not one member stood up to discuss before this House why it is very important that the payments be made directly to the railway, rather than to the producer. No one here took the time to take a look at why the wheat pool and the federation of agriculture are taking a particular position. The member, I must say, for Kelvington-Wadena must not have read the motion, because he certainly didn't speak on it, but I want to indicate that the benefits of the federal payments directly to the railways are fourfold.

First of all, it will permit the rail revenue shortfall to be paid by the federal government directly, and therefore be treated properly as a transportation subsidy, so you have it clearly earmarked as a transportation subsidy if it's paid to the railroad.

Secondly, direct payments to the railway by the federal government offer greater assurance to grain producers that performance guarantees will be effective. In other words, if you are making the payments directly to the railway, and if their performance is shorter or less than what is expected or can be reasonably expected, the government then has the power to withdraw and put pressure on them, because the subsidy is being paid to improve the transportation system, and indeed, to provide the proper services to the farmers. Take that away, and pay it to the producers, and the strength and power base of the government to influence the CPR are also removed.

Never did one member address that, because obviously it's their friends, the CPR.

Thirdly, the direct payment option is more acceptable politically to both western and eastern Canada, since it's then clearly a national policy addressing regional transportation need. In other words, the subsidy will be in the terms if it's paid directly to the railroads, strictly a transportation policy per se, and it will be for both eastern and western Canada.

The fourth reason for the payment being made directly to the railroad is administration is direct and simple and less costly to the Canadian public.

I want to say that a very strong position has been taken by the agricultural movements in this province. Here we have a wheat pool which was built by our forefathers, by the farmers of this province. We have come forward here with a debate, Mr. Speaker, on who it should be paid to, which would benefit the farmers most, and I want to say not one member of the opposition will get up and support the farmers of Saskatchewan.

I want to say that when we circulate this watered-down amendment to the wheat pools of Saskatchewan and Alberta and Manitoba, to Unifarm of Alberta and the Saskatchewan Federation of Agriculture, I am going to say that the weakness of the Tory position is going to be evidently very clear to that large number of farmers and producers out there.

I want to say that there obviously are other friends of the Tory party which make it impossible for them to support our very refined resolution. Obviously there is the CPR, which I have mentioned. One also has to look at Cargill Grain Company, friends of the Tory party. You have to look at the stock exchange boys in Winnipeg. And of course what they want is to have it paid to the producers so that eventually more and more costs can be passed on to the farmer, rather than being placed on the back of the CPR and demanding a proper performance with respect to carrying the produce to market.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that I am most disappointed both in the comments and in the amendment, because I want to say that what is evident here is that the party opposite refused to take a concrete position in assisting the farmers of Saskatchewan and western Canada in addressing this very real question.

I will be supporting the original amendment and . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BIRKBECK: — I just wanted to enter into this debate momentarily. I don't want to go on at great length for the benefit of members opposite.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, at the outset that I, for one, am not disappointed with the position taken by the official opposition. Because had it not been for the position taken by the official opposition — the former administration, the former Government of Saskatchewan we would not be government today.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BIRKBECK: — They have taken a position consistently of talk with no action — consistently. Mr. Speaker, if we were only in government for one year, we could do more for the farming community in this province than this former government was able

to do in a decade.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Speaker, I'm most amused by the motion put by the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, most amused in the sense that he is asking that the increases in rail be charged to the federal government and that they be paid to the railroads. Now it's too bad that that member isn't in the House because I would like to make sure that he understands their new position.

And I want to refresh the memories of all members of the previous administration's position during the election. The Saskatchewan solution. Do we all remember the Saskatchewan solution, the former minister of agriculture running around talking about the Saskatchewan solution?

And, Mr. Speaker, what was the Saskatchewan solution? The Saskatchewan solution was diametrically opposed to the position stated by the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg under this motion under rule 16, and diametrically opposed to the words just spoken by the member for Pelly. Diametrically opposed. The member for Pelly said that the movement of grain in this country is in the interest of all Canadian, a position not one of us in this House disagrees with, a position that all Canadians should pay for, not one of us in this House disagrees with.

That is the Conservative policy. That is Conservative philosophy the member is speaking. The Saskatchewan solution, the Saskatchewan solution, Mr. Speaker, (and you would remember it well) was that Saskatchewan farmers, in particular Saskatchewan farmers and maybe Saskatchewan people generally, should pay for any further improvements to the railroads. And, Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you that I couldn't find one farmer in my riding that wanted to own some damn tunnel in B.C. — not one.

SOME HON. MEMBER: — Hear, hear!

MR. BIRKBECK: — So, Mr. Speaker, it's for that very reason that I say that I'm pleased with the position of the official opposition. And it's because of your insane, unlogical positions that you take that you're in opposition. The member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg speaks about how the government of the day is split on this issue. Well, Mr. Speaker, if we were split four ways, we'd still be in greater numbers than you are in opposition. And, Mr. Speaker, if we were to split the opposition, I question whether there is such a precise instrument to split such a small entity.

And, Mr. Speaker, this question of the crowrate. When, I wonder, would the members of the opposition think of some issue, any issue, that they can speak about other than the crowrate? The crowrate — that's all I've been hearing since I was elected to this Assembly in 1975.

In the Manitoba legislature when you walk in the grand entry and the lobby, they have two big buffalo. When you come in to this legislature, we should have two big crows out there because, Mr. Speaker, that's all I hear from the NDP. The crowrate. Well, Mr. Speaker, our position, our Minister of Agriculture, our government has said time over time during the campaign and our position is not different, that we stand firmly behind the farmers that they will not pay more for the movement of grain.

Now then, Mr. Speaker, for the member for Pelly, I must say it again: the farmers will not

pay more for the movement of grain. That's the position we take. We stand behind the farmers. That's where we stand. We believe in the statutory crowrate, statutory crowrate. That's been well-identified, Mr. Speaker. That is in print. We stand for the statutory crowrate. So that if there are to be changes, Mr. Speaker, to the statutory crowrate, it must go, Mr. Speaker, to the House of Commons for all members of the House of Commons to debate on behalf of those farmers that we support.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I being to wonder, and that is why, Mr. Speaker, I've entered into this debate again. I'm counting the number of times that I've stood in this House defending the position of the farmer. Obviously, we've been doing a pretty darn good job or it because we sure do have a lot of support from the farming community.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BIRKBECK: — I just want to suggest, Mr. Speaker (and I don't want to help the NDP in any way), to the members of the opposition that you've wrung out every political ounce of good there might have been in the crowrate — every bit. In fact, it's so wrung out that it's more wrung out than the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to make very quickly one more point. I couldn't understand for the life of me how a political party, the NDP, prior to the election, in office, after having taken such a very strong position against those awful multinationals (if anything bad happened, it had to have been the CPR; it had to have been the CPR, notwithstanding that) now, after having this position consistently against the multinationals, Mr. Speaker, I would challenge any of the member in the opposition to stand up in the debate, under this rule 16 and explain at least to me, never mind to 54 other members, how you could turn around and take a diametrically opposed position and say, "Well, we want to buy into the railroads. We want to be your buddies now." I tell you, Mr. Speaker, and the members of the opposition, that the former premier and the now Prime Minister of Canada jumped into bed — I don't know how many times they did that together — defying western Canadians, defying the farmers, defying producers. What did it produce? All that it produced, Mr. Speaker, that I'm aware of was Two-Track Trudeau. That's all it got.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BIRKBECK: — Now they had pillow dreams, Mr. Speaker, about what should be good for the farmers. That's why I say that your words in this House today are nothing more than rhetoric. Our members have got up and they have told you what they're doing. They're out in Saskatchewan where the farmers are. They don't farm in Regina, but out there where the land is. They're out there saving rail lines. That's very important on behalf of the producers.

Mr. Speaker I would suggest to the NDP members in opposition that they might want to consider doing something constructive, because I, for one, am sick and tired and have heard quite enough of all of this rhetoric around the crowrate. Our position is well identified. If you think we're second, you're going to get some kind of political mileage by introducing a motion of this nature saying that, "Well, you know we want to support the farmers and the crowrate, and have the federal government pick up the tab, and you have them pay it to the railroads, and get us in some kind of a bind over that issue." You're barking up the wrong tree if you're barking at all, Norm. All right? So I would like you to consider that.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in closing, I just want to thank the member for Kelvington-Wadena and, of course, my good seatmate, the member for Shellbrook-Torch River, for introducing this amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order! I must advise the member his time has expired.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to get involved in the debate under this rule 16 motion. I have to say that coming out of the debate and procedures that went into changing the rules to allow for this type of debate was an important measure that was taken under the last government. It is probably one of the only opportunities that a government allows its backbenchers to get up and get involved in debate that are important to their constituents and to the province of Saskatchewan.

The debate has been, basically, on the resolution and the amendment, the resolution that was very clearly pinpointed to a direct concern in the province of Saskatchewan dealing with grain transportation in western Canada. And I think the amendment that has been introduced only reinforces statements that have been made by the Minister of Agriculture, and give every indication that no decision has been made on where this government stands on transportation policy.

I'd like to just quote, I believe, the *Star-Phoenix*, November 30, and Berntson is quoted. The headline is "Berntson Dodges Crow Method-of-Payment Issue."

Agriculture minister Eric Berntson's refusal to decide where grain freight subsidies should be paid did not sit well with members of the National Farmers' Union Monday.

And he was speaking at a convention where they were trying to get him to pinpoint exactly where he stood on this issue, the issue that we're debating today, and the issue which the farmer's union and the wheat pools will be very interested in knowing that an amendment has been introduced by the government that once again leaves them riding on the fence.

It went on to say:

The agricultural minister admitted his government's caucus is split down the middle on the method-of-payment issue. All he would assure the NFU delegates is that he will be toting the official government line, whenever the debate is settled.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that if it's like other issues, I imagine all farmers will be demanded that they tote the Tory line as well, if the Harry Van Mulligen issue, which we have been debating in this House for several days in question period, is any example.

Mr. Speaker, I think the true issue at point here, as well as the monetary payments, is the equal rates for equal distance that we have protected in the crowrate at the present time.

The member for Moosomin says he is tired of talking about the crowrate, and I can well imagine that he is, because when we look at the record of the Conservative Party in dealing with this issue, it's not one that they can be terribly proud of. And the member for Moosomin says that the NDP continually vote with the Liberals in Ottawa, and I would just like to, for the record, set that straight, because there are some surprising numbers if you look back over the last two years, on how those votes line up in the House of Commons.

In those votes that have been recorded in the House, 37 times the NDP has voted with the Liberals. And how many times gave the Conservatives jumped into bed? Well, it's not 10 or 20 or 50. It's 69, not 37, but 69 times that the Liberals and the Tories have jumped into bed. And, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you they're in bed together on the Gilson report and on transportation in western Canada.

Mr. Speaker there is another reason why the Tories and Liberals are together on this issue of where the payment should be made, and I think it goes back to where a great deal of the contributions come from, that fund both the Tory and Liberal parties.

In 1979, for example, there was \$35,000 paid directly from the CPR to the Conservative Party, federally. And, Mr. Speaker, there is a good deal of that money at every election that goes out to the provinces to fund their campaigns. How much did the Liberals get out of the CPR in 1979? Well, exactly the same, \$35,000. And then people wonder how the Conservative Party and Liberal Party have a problem in keeping the crowrate when the pressure is coming from the CPR to get rid of it. Well, I can tell you that those kind of contributions just might firm up a deal with the Conservative Party and the CPR.

This has a lot to do with the crow, Mr. Speaker, simply because when there is money paid from a corporation to a political party, I think that it's very difficult for that party to then go and rule against certain decisions that affect the corporate profit of that corporation.

What about 1980? Did that scandalous type of donation from the CPR quit in 1980? No, not at all. In 1980 the donations to the Tory party were \$35,000 again, and to the Liberals, \$35,000. It's very evident why the member for Moosomin doesn't want to talk about the crowrate, because every time we talk about the crowrate we talk about the CPR and we talk about donations that go from the CPR to the Conservative Party in order to get the crowrate dismantled.

Mr. Speaker, I say that's why we have heard very little from the Minister of Agriculture: one Telex to the minister asking to keep the crowrate very weakly. I wonder why the Premier of the province appointed this individual to run the Department of Agriculture. Well, I think if we look at this individual's history we will find a very, very colored past in terms of his support of the crowrate and the grain-handling system in Saskatchewan. You need only realize that the Minister of Agriculture is also a member of the Palliser Wheat Growers' Association, a group that is adamantly opposed to the crowrate. It is very much supported by the Liberal Party. In fact, a good number of workers who worked diligently to get Trudeau elected in past campaigns are directly involved in the Palliser wheat growers. And we not only have the former members for Qu'Appelle and Thunder Creek who were very directly involved in the Liberal Party, but I say we have a Minister of Agriculture who is very much involved in the Palliser wheat growers who are very closely associated with the Liberal Party in Canada.

And so I guess it's little wonder that a resolution very pointedly addressed to an issue of great concern, as the member for Quill Lakes addressed earlier on, was watered down to the point where it's almost worthless spending our time here today debating it, because very little is going to come from it.

Mr. Speaker, I suppose all of us who are rural members can well understand the CPR wanting to change the crowrate. Their job in their minds is to create profits, and to earn the most money possible for their shareholders. And very simply put, they can earn more money if they can get rid of branch lines and get rid of the crowrate. What's a little more difficult to understand is how this number of Conservative members can get together and support that kind of a policy, when in fact the people who supported them in the last election sent them here for quite a different reason. I think they sent them here to introduce policy that would help the farmers who are very tightly squeezed in their agricultural operations. And the cash receipts in this year would indicate that the farmers in Saskatchewan are facing very difficult times under a Conservative government.

Mr. Speaker, the rates so far this year would indicate that we are running fourth worst in Canada in terms of cash receipts, just ahead of Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, and Alberta. Our cash receipts are down by 3.7 per cent in real terms; in net income, economists are predicting that it'll be somewhere between 15 and 20 per cent. The old adage that Tory times are tough times is coming true, not only in the cities because of lack of jobs but I say over the next two years in the agricultural sector as well.

I think if the members opposite were serious they would be standing up supporting this motion, not amending it and watering it down. The members would be introducing policies like their colleagues in Alberta have done, where a program to reduce the fuel cost has been introduced, where 31.8 cents on every gallon of diesel fuel used for agricultural production is being paid out by that government.

And that's not new. We have had a program like that when farmers faced similar problems in the past. The member for Quill Lakes will have been in cabinet when we faced those kinds of tough times in the agricultural sector before. What did we do? We introduced a farm fuel rebate program that paid out money to farmers to help and assist them in their agricultural production.

So, Mr. Speaker, I say that if this government was serious about proceeding with helping farmers and getting their grain to market, and ensuring that the branch lines would remain in place, that they would be up and debating this program and not issuing press releases and going to agricultural meetings and telling groups that they have not made up their minds in the most basic, fundamental — speaking of fundamental — issues that face the farmer today.

The members have got up and talked about everything else other than payment that we are . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — I must inform the member that his time has expired.

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to join in this debate. You know, the member that just spoke made comments about a fuel rebate. Total hypocrisy. They also were the fellows that cancelled them because they said they weren't needed, and they were the

fellows that just before the election rushed them back in. But, Mr. Speaker, the most astonishing thing I heard today came from the member for Quill Lakes, and I will quote him word by word: "Not one member of the opposition will support the farmers."

That is exactly what he said. He said that not one member of the opposition, which is the NDP, will support the farmers. He said it in this debate just a few minutes ago when he was on his feet. You emphatically told us where you are coming from, and it's going to show up in *Hansard* tomorrow. It's going to show up in *Hansard* tomorrow, guys, because you said it on your feet. You finally made it; you slipped. The member for Quill Lakes slipped when he said it. He didn't mean to say it. But exact words, exact words, Mr. Speaker: "No one member of the opposition will support the farmers." That's exactly what he said on a debate about keeping the crow and protecting the producers of Saskatchewan. He said it. It's going to be in *Hansard* tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, I think I hit a sour note over there boys. Did you finally slip up and tell us where you are really coming for?

MR. SPEAKER: — Order. I'm going to ask for a little order on both sides of the House. The hon. member cannot make himself heard.

MR. KATZMAN: — You know, the member from his seat says he can hear me. I know he can hear me because he doesn't like what he's hearing, because that's what they said. The member for Quill Lakes actually said it. He had the gall to say it in this House. He's just finally realized he's got to speak the truth. He slipped up a little. He spoke the truth in the House. You know, he doesn't want to support the producers. That's what he's saying.

And what does the Conservative motion say? The member for Kelvington-Wadena said the producers of this province should not pay more for the transportation of grain. And that's our position. That's the end of the line, baby. No producer in this province should have to pay another red cent to move his grain. We subsidize the shirt manufacturers in Quebec; we subsidize all kinds of products that we help make in the East. And this is the one subsidy that we get toward the producers in the West. And now they want to take it away. Now why are the Liberals playing their little game with the little red rump party, the NDP? It's because there are not enough votes out here. They are not worried about the votes from here.

And you know, the other comment there — Big Daddy government isn't saying this is the way it has to be. We're saying that the payments should reflect the wishes of the producers. That's called democracy. Let the producers speak. You never heard of that when you were government. You just told them what to do and if they didn't like it they got it. That's the way they used to work.

Mr. Speaker, you know I'm still a little shocked from the comments from the member for Quill Lakes. I just didn't believe he actually said them. You know, the Minister of Highways and I, myself, we looked at each other and said, "Did he really say that?": And we agreed he did. I don't know what happened, if he had just taken some truth serum or something, but he all of a sudden told us where they are coming from.

Oh, the Leader of the Opposition has just arrived. I must tell him what the member for Quill Lakes said when he was on his feet. The Leader of the Opposition must know that. Reflecting the NDP policy, the member for Quill Lakes, standing on his feet in this

debate about the protection of the farmers re the crowrate, said: "Not one member of the opposition will support the farmers."

Now the NDP is the opposition, Mr. Blakeney, and you're the leader of that, and that's your policy, so the member for Quill Lakes tells us. You know, it's pretty impossible to believe what I actually heard, and you know, I can't understand them not wanting to support the amendment which says that the producers of this province should not pay more for transportation of grain. They spout all the fancy words, but they say they're not going to support that motion. Oh, that's terrible. Under the crow benefit, should we mean statutory? They say they're not supporting that. That's what those members said when they got on their feet. But then they give us all that hot air about everything else. Those are the two fundamental things involved here: that the producers should not have to pay any more, and second of all, the crowrate must stay statutory.

And the third option we lay out before you is let the producers make their decision on the remaining portion. Listen to what the producers have to say, not always just the political parties or the political party's friend (in the case of the opposition in happens to be, I believe, the National Farmers' Union). Oh, it's interesting. I just heard . . .

You know, there are more members on this side of the House who take grain to the wheat pool than there are on that side of the House, so don't give me that. There are more members on this side who belong to co-ops than there are on that side of the House, so don't give me that malarkey.

You know, you guys only use those organizations. They don't need you, you need them; and they've left you out in the cold. They did on April 26.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. KATZMAN: — You know, the other night the member for Saltcoats, Mr. Walter Johnson, and myself had the opportunity of meeting with the wheat pool delegates. We had a long chat about the crow and where we stand, and, you know, they agreed with us. They agreed — these are delegates to the wheat pool — that the farmers shall not pay any more. They agreed with us that the crow should remain statutory, and what does the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg seem to indicate?

MR. SPEAKER: — Order. It's my duty to advise the House that the 75-minute time allotment for this debate has expired.

MOTIONS

Resolution No. 16 — Marketing of Prairie Gems

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Speaker, it is again a pleasure for me to get into a debate that concerns farmers. We heard a lot of rhetoric from the members opposite a while ago, but none of it would indicate to the farmers just where they really do stand. As was mentioned, they seem to take both sides, whichever seems to be to their advantage at the time.

After my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I will be moving the motion suggesting that this Assembly express its full support (1) for the Canadian Wheat Board as the sole marketing agency for all prairie grains and oilseeds, and (2) for an increase in the level

of farm grain prices to reflect costs of production.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution is a very important one. It's one that I will be seeking the support of every member in this Chamber, even the PC members. I will be seeking their support because of the principles that are fundamentally important to all Saskatchewan farmers.

First, this resolution supports the Canadian Wheat Board, the wheat board which was established back in 1935. It was established after a hard struggle by the farmers of this province and western Canada, a struggle they went into because they had no other choice, Mr. Speaker. The situation that they were in at the time made it very difficult for them to stay in agriculture unless there was some method of them being able to move their grain and get a reasonable price for it, and to know what that price was going to be at a given time.

Mr. Speaker, in that struggle at that time, the farmers of this province had to fight against the large private grain trades. They had to fight against the same people that still exist today and the same ones who are the friends of the government opposite, the ones that continue to suggest that we should be moving more and more into the open market system — the system which existed when the farmers finally joined together by co-operating with one another and devised a system that was more benefit to them.

Today, Mr. Speaker, we see the members opposite wanting to go back to the system they had back in the '30s.

Over the years the wheat board has worked very well for the producers of Saskatchewan. It has helped to maintain a certain level of income for the farmers of Saskatchewan. They knew what they were going to get when they sold their grain, and at the same time they then were able to budget themselves, budget their operation. In that way, Mr. Speaker, the farmer were productive, were able to continue on the land without the threat that when they needed the income, when their grain was ready for sale, the prices would go down as has been the case in the past.

In our view, Mr. Speaker, the benefits and the advantages of the orderly marketing system are very clear. The wheat board is an institution that western Canada cannot afford to lose. It is an agency which should not only have the power to market wheat, barley and oats, but it should also include the oil seeds — flax, canola, and rye . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Mr. Speaker, it should include some of the other grains, unless of course, as the members opposite are suggesting, the farmer should have something gamble with. Because when you remove the orderly system of marketing that's exactly what the farmers would have to do — gamble, gamble with the produce that they produce, the produce that they have to sell, a food commodity.

Mr. Speaker, we would also invite the member opposite to join in support of the second part of this resolution, and that's calling for an increase in the level of farm grain prices to reflect to the cost of production. Mr. Speaker, it has been very clear that in recent years the general level of the commodity or industrial prices have really not reflected and not kept pace with the cost of production. We see the farmer continue to go down and down in his net income while his costs of production continue to go up.

It is many organizations within the agricultural industry, like the wheat pool and farmers' union, and an agency like the wheat board, which will, if anybody every will, assist the farmer to maintain at least a reasonable income. We have to continue to fight

the private U.S. grain trades — companies like Cargill, Dreyfus and Continental. We've often heard many of the members opposite talk about Cargill and how nice it is to have them in this province. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that Cargill is here, not because they are interested in supporting the farmer or helping the farmer, they are here because they see there is a possibility of a profit to be made by them, and they will continue to be in this province as long as they have a government like the members opposite, the Tory government of this province, who support the open market system and what organizations like Cargill represent, Mr. Speaker. So, the farmers of this province will have to continue fighting corporations like Cargill and the open market system if they are going to survive in agriculture in this province.

Mr. Speaker, it is very necessary that there be some close co-operation between the wheat board and the exporting countries of the world. We have to cooperate with many other countries who export grain and who regulate some of the pricing. We have seen what is happening in the U.S. where there really is no system like the wheat board, where the private grain trade sets the prices. And we see that fluctuating up and down. When all that the companies are concerned about is the level of profit they can receive, then they are not going to be that concerned as to what the profit is to the farmer. And that is happening in the States. If we don't protect an organization like the wheat board in this country, then we will be subject to the same thing that is happening in the U.S.

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite feel that supporting the wheat board is just something that comes and goes and you don't really have to worry about what happens there. The wheat board to them is something that is here today, and if it's gone tomorrow it doesn't really matter. But I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the farmers of Saskatchewan are very concerned about what happens to the wheat board. They are concerned because they know there are still a good number of farmers out there that remember the '30s. They know what it could be like if the wheat board was not here today.

Mr. Speaker, I think we are all very well aware of what the position of the Minister of Agriculture will be. The position of the Minister of Agriculture is to sit on the fence, just as he mentioned at the meeting of the wheat pool not too long ago. When they asked him a few questions about the crowrate, he said, "Well, we're divided in our caucus. Half of the caucus goes one way and half thinks the other way." And he said, "I won't commit myself at this point. When the decision is made, I will be on the winning side."

Well, Mr. Speaker, that is the position of this government on just about everything that happens in this province. If they see that the winning side is going to be the side of the multinationals, that's where they will be. But if the pressures come from the people of the province, if they feel that the people are making an issue of something and that it's going to be popular, then you hear this government say, "That is the side we are going to be on."

AN HON. MEMBER: — We're going to be on the farmers' side.

MR. LUSNEY: — Some members say that they are going to be on the farmers' side. But when we look at some of the resolution or the amendments that have been proposed here, and when we look at some of the statements that have been made by the Minister of Agriculture, it would make one wonder just whether they are on the side of the farmers of this province.

Mr. Speaker, we know what the views of this government are. And we know what the

views — he isn't in here now — of the members for Moosomin were. It's too bad he isn't in his seat now, because I would like to refresh his memory on his views of agriculture and some of the farmers of this province. And he said in his opinion that the family farm is an outmoded concept. Yes, Mr. Speaker. That is the opinion of the member for Moosomin and I would expect maybe the opinion of many of the other members in the government. And we also know the views of the Premier. The Premier, a few years back, wrote that 80 per cent of the producers were inefficient. And, Mr. Speaker, he wasn't the Premier then and that was his opinion. Today because he is the Premier he knows that the farmers of this province are important and he will probably be taking a different stand on it. There's no question that he will take a different stand on it, because that is the way the members on that side — the Tory government — have been operating. They take the opposition that they think is popular at the time, regardless of what they believe in. They take the popular position.

But, Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House believe that we should be out there fighting for the farmers. We should try to maintain the wheat board and we should try to keep the statutory rate where it won't cost the farmer any more to move his grain. That is what we should be fighting for and I think every body in this Assembly should be voting in favor of this resolution and any other resolution that comes up supporting the farmers of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

Mr. HODGINS: — Mr. Speaker, I am greatly amused and entertained at the . . .

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, in concluding, I would like to move the motion, seconded by the member for Quill Lakes:

That this Assembly express its full support: (1) for the Canadian Wheat Board as the sole marketing agency for all major prairie grains and oilseeds; and (2) for an increase in the level of farm grain prices to reflect costs of production.

HON. MR. ANDREW: — Point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I believe that the member had taken his place and the member for Melfort had stood in his place and was recognized by the Chair. Of course once that happens the member had lost his place. The motion is then dead and cannot proceed.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: — The point of order is technically well taken but I feel that the motion should be allowed to go through.

HON. MR. ANDREW: — Mr. Speaker, I take it that you also would proceed to recognize the member for Melfort to be able to now stand and speak in his place.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: — Yes, I would recognize the member for Melfort.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. HODGINS: — Mr. Speaker, I take pleasure in being afforded the opportunity to make a few comments with respect to his resolution before the House. I find it very, very amusing and entertaining to listen to the member for Pelly speak, as our fine

Minister of Energy and Mines has put it, in a hypocritical and sanctimonious manner. He brings up the Canadian Wheat Board and tries to indicate to the members of this Assembly whether it was NDP members of CCF members who were responsible for the formation of that board. Well, Mr. Speaker, I would like to indicate to this House that it was a Conservative government who was responsible for the formation of that board.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. HODGINS: — Mr. Speaker, I propose to this House that the members opposite are doing nothing but practising a fine charade in which they propose to be the benefactors of the farmers industry. Mr. Speaker, nothing could be further from the truth. I look, Mr. Speaker, at the legislation currently before this House respecting our new farm purchase program, and when you look at the dollar amounts that will be committed there over the next 27 months, some \$37.5 million, Mr. Speaker, I feel that that is work on behalf of the farming industry.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. HODGINS: — Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to this House that our farm purchase program compared against the land bank program of the former administration — I would suggest there is no comparison. The only thing that the land bank program did was to give a farmer a box full of rent receipts. What we are giving him, Mr. Speaker, is a title, and I speak of pride of ownership, Mr. Speaker, and in that way, Mr. Speaker, I propose to this House that we are for the Canadian farmer and for the Saskatchewan farmer. Mr. Speaker, I again find it very, very interesting how the member opposite gets up and purports to be for the Canadian farmer.

This resolution before the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, has wide-ranging implications. It is very, very broad in nature. Unquestionably I do agree that we do have problems with grain prices for our Saskatchewan farmers. Certainly the marketing of their agricultural products needs review by this Assembly, by the federal parliament, and every other provincial Assembly in Canada. The implications of expressing full support for the Canadian Wheat Board as the sole marketing agency are many. This brings up a bill currently before the federal parliament respecting Canagrex which is a very, very wide-ranging bill and a bill that deserves a great deal of attention, both by the federal parliament and by this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, would like to commend our Minister of Agriculture for his firm stance and opinion on what those far-ranging powers of Canagrex might do to the agricultural marketing process in this country. And, Mr. Speaker, in view of the wide-ranging implications, I would suggest that there are many, many person on this side of the House, and perhaps on the other side, who would like to get up and speak on this topic. And, Mr. Speaker, in view of that fact, I would like to ask for leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 47 — An Act respecting Building Accessibility Standards and the Inspection of Buildings

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

It is with a good deal of pleasure that I take this unique opportunity to move a bill, which apparently we have all agreed upon several times. We did so before the election and we have done so apparently, hopefully, now after the election.

It isn't something that began last March when the government introduced its bill and the opposition of that day voted for it, second reading. It began somewhat earlier than that. In 1979 the Saskatchewan Human Rights Code was passed to ensure the rights of people with physical disabilities against discrimination in areas of employment and housing.

And as a society that was a big step forward from an earlier day when people who were disabled were not thought of as someone who should be given any special consideration. What we need now, Mr. Speaker, is to take a second step. It is not enough to say that people with physical disabilities should have equal rights if in fact because of a building design they can't work at a job that someone else can work at, or because of a building design they cannot take an apartment or living accommodation that is available to other people.

What we passed in 1979 was to some extent equality in words only. What we need to do now is to make that equality to a physical reality. Many groups have voiced their concerns on this issue, and we believe they deserve to be heard.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to briefly deal with several highlights of this bill in summary form; then I want to continue to deal with it in somewhat more detail.

Accessibility in the bill means the accommodation of various elements of what we've described as a built environment that allows entrance, egress from, and the use of buildings, grounds, and facilities by the public. I point out that this means all members of the public, including the handicapped.

This act would apply to all public buildings built in Saskatchewan with some rare exceptions. It applies to all government buildings. By and large, it would be administered by local authorities in each city, town, village, rural municipality, who may appoint inspectors to enforce compliance with the act. If an inspector finds that standards are not being met, he or she may, by notice in writing, specify the contravention and order changes to be made.

That may be a fairly Draconian measure. It may involve putting members of the public who own buildings to some considerable expense. We have therefore set up an appeal mechanism. Anyone may appeal such an order to Court of Queen's Bench. That is a departure from what was recommended by the accessibility committee, and I will be dealing with that in more detail later on.

I would add as well that the Lieutenant-Governor in Council may make regulations carrying out the intent of this act describing standards for materials and equipment, accessibility, construction, public safety during construction of the building. Penalties for contravention are some of the highest to be found in any legislation. Penalties for contravention of this act are \$5,000 for individuals, and where it is a continuing offence, \$5,000 per day; and up to \$10,000 for a corporation and again, \$10,000 for continuing offence. We believe the magnitude of those fines are justified given the amount of money to be saved by disregarding the act.

I would remind all hon. members that a nearly identical bill received support of the opposition of the day last spring. They supported the bill when it was introduced and the bill was unanimously passed on second reading. It even went so far later on as to produce a somewhat watered down version of a bill of their own sponsored by the member for Regina South. I do hope the member for Regina South is here and has an opportunity to vote on this bill.

By way of background, Mr. Speaker, I should point out to all hon. members that the provisions of The Uniform Building and Accessibility Standards Act advisory committee on uniform building standards created on June 1, 1981. The establishment of the committee was advocated jointly by the then ministers of labor, mineral resources, urban affairs, and rural affairs. Terms of reference of that committee included the responsibility to make recommendations on the feasibility and the adoption of uniform building standards for province-wide application. And at the same time the committee was charged with responsibility for reviewing the accessibility standards dealing with access of disabled persons to public places, as was submitted by the provincial accessibility committee of Saskatchewan in August 1980.

Particularly, the committee was asked to review existing building standards as they related to recreation facilities. Members of the advisability committee, chaired by Mr. Cliff Dark, then special assistant to the deputy minister of labor, were drawn from a wide variety of public and private organizations with interests, concerns and expertise in the areas of building and accessibility standards. Some of those areas included: the provincial accessibility committee of Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities' Association, the Voice of the Handicapped, The Saskatchewan Construction Association, the list goes on for some 10 additional groups represented on the committee. I won't read them all. Obviously, the task faced by the committee was a formidable one, both in terms of magnitude and complexity. In this regard, it should be noted that the committee was assigned particular emphasis to the need for disabled persons.

It goes without saying that the accessibility of disabled persons represents a vital concern for any design work or architectural work done on any new building. And accordingly, a special subcommittee was set up to deal with the special problems of handicapped people.

What we are recommending is, with one exception, the report of that committee. And I should point out that the job of making the world, at least the Saskatchewan portion of the world, accessible to handicapped people by no means ends with what I hope will be the passage of this bill. What is presently before this Assembly is really a framework which will facilitate the introduction and the maintenance of appropriate standards.

The framework, however, has to be fleshed out by appropriate regulations from the Lieutenant-Governor in Council that the primary responsibility for its enforcement lies with municipalities. It is the municipal level of government that is closest to the public. It is probably appropriate that it be they who are responsible for the somewhat sensitive job of enforcing this legislation.

The problem which the committee was originally set up to deal with dealt with the lack of a national building code in force in this province. The Urban Municipality Act permits the writing of building by-laws and through this the National Building Code could have been adopted throughout Saskatchewan. By and large it has not been. The majority of the urban centres do not have any type of uniform building standards. That's even truer

in rural areas. There has been a noticeable absence of any standard, or indeed any facilities to allow convenient access of disabled persons to buildings. As I mentioned earlier, remedial action has been recommended by the Provincial Accessibility Committee and this issue has been followed up by the Voice of the Handicapped who met with the Premier, met with our caucus as well, and were here last week in the Assembly and they were welcomed by the Assembly.

The legislation, which I am putting forward, is by and large what the committee recommended and it will ensure accessibility to all new public buildings built in the future and major alterations to existing buildings. It is particularly appropriate, Mr. Speaker, that the development activity relating to accessibility commenced during 1981 — -that was the International Year of the Disabled. And the legislation will now embody the standard which is symbolic of that continuing need beyond the year of recognition, to adopt measure which will provide disabled residents of Saskatchewan with the same rights and freedoms that the rest of us take for granted.

I fervently hope, Mr. Speaker, that this bill does not represent a do as I say and not as I do approach by the members of the government benches. The standards which were set out were fully accepted by the present government when they were in opposition, fully accepted by the present opposition when they were in government. And I hope that the government has not experienced the kind of metamorphosis on this issue that it has on so many others in the transmission from this side of the House to the other side of the House.

It is distressing indeed, to spend a bit of time acquainting oneself with the standards in this country with regard to arrangements for disabled or handicapped people. They are utterly and totally inadequate. The reorientation of our thinking is required to identify this group in our society and to see what the requirements are. How many of us in our normal daily routine think about disabled persons and their problems? How many of us think about the blind person who can't possibly enter a building without some form of guidance? How many of us consider the plight of the crippled person who can't negotiate the steps of a building which doesn't have a proper hand railing without a lead-on and lead-off? How many of us contemplate the difficulties of a person in a wheel chair who must use washroom facilities? How many of us contemplate the difficulty of disabled people who cannot see the numbers on top of doors?

One of the things that the Voice of the Handicapped pointed out to us the other day was that if you put office numbers on top of the doors, a good many disabled people can't see them, thus numbers should be on the doors themselves. This is the sort of thing most of us would never think of.

Mr. Speaker, the principles embodied in this bill will required that every building in Saskatchewan, with exceptions set out in regulations, be designed, built, altered, demolished, and indeed, occupied in accordance with the standard prescribed herein. The standard will not apply to existing buildings, except to the extent that they may be altered or changed.

A system of fines for violations of the act and regulations as set out — I have stated that they are fairly high, and that's essential, Mr. Speaker, if it is not to be more profitable to disregard the bill than to pay the fine.

In concluding shortly, Mr. Speaker, I want to just point out for the benefit of the members opposite that this was an issue which was not just current before the election,

it was also current during the election. The Voice of the Handicapped sent to each member of each political party, I think, not each member running, but each political party, a questionnaire. One of the questions was: Do you support the need for comprehensive, uniform building standard, including accessibility legislation for disabled citizens?

It was answered by the New Democratic Party, by the provincial secretary Larry Deters who simply said: Agreed.

It was answered by the Progressive Conservative Party of Saskatchewan on April 15, 1982, by a letter over the signature of Grant Devine, in which he says that (and I won't read the whole letter), "We certainly do support accessibility legislation and we will re-introduce that bill as PC government policy."

I say to members opposite, the bill has been studied exhaustively. There is no need for a further study. I say to members opposite that this is an idea whose time has come, and I urge upon all members the adoption of this bill so that we may get on with the work of making this province accessible to handicapped people. I therefore move second reading of Bill No. 47.

HON. MR. ANDREW: — I think the member opposite in moving the bill indicated that the statements of the Premier were clearly set out with regard to support for the concept of the handicapped and the whole question of accessibility. I think the Minister of Social Services, who has spent a fair amount of time so far dealing with this whole thing, will want to address this particular issue. For that reason, I therefore beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

HON. MR. ANDREW: — Mr. Speaker, if I could perhaps expedite some time in the House. We will be asking to stand motions for returns (debatable) 1 to 58, so we don't have to go through them each step of the way. I think the Deputy Premier is basically handling this. He is unfortunately away today. I believe he has spoken with regard to those motions for returns and how they would be handled. I can assure you that the delivery of that particular information to the opposition will be done much more expeditiously than was done in the past. We are attempting to deal with some of this stuff now, and I would ask that we stand motions for returns (debatable) 1 through 58 with one motion rather than go through it 58 different times.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I 'm not quite sure how that's going to work. Each one of these motions gives the mover an opportunity to move it. I want to say a word or two on no. 2 — not by way of delaying the House but I do want to say something — so I think we should go to no. 2 at least.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: — Leave has not been granted.

MOTIONS FOR RETURNS

Return No. 4

MR. LUSNEY moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 4 showing:

With respect to the highway projects announced in the legislature in March, 1982, and set out in a document entitled "Saskatchewan Highways Projects

Array” and tabled in the legislature on March 23, 1982: (1) the names of those projects for which tenders have been called and the date on which the tender was called; (2) the names of those projects for which tenders have been let and the date on which each tender was let; (3) the names of the successful bidders and the amount of each successful bid; and (4) in each case, whether the successful bid was the lowest bid, and if not, the amounts of the unsuccessful bids.

HON. MR. ANDREW: — We will be asking for some amendments with regard to this motion for return. Those amendments will be advanced by the Deputy Premier at the next appropriate time and for that reason, Mr. Speaker, I would beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

Return No. 16

HON. MR. BLAKENEY moved, seconded by the member for Shaunavon, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 16 showing:

For the period of May 8, 1982 to November 26, 1982, the names and salaries of each executive assistant, special assistant and other non-clerical staff employed in the office of the Premier.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — I just propose to make some very brief comments. This order for return asks for something which is really quite simple: the names and salaries of each executive assistant, special assistant and non-clerical staff employed in the office of the Premier. I’m sure some words could be found which could change the import of that. The dates May 8th to November 26th are surely not capable of being misunderstood. “Names” is a fairly simple word; “salaries” is a fairly simple word. We then go on to “executive assistant, special assistant and other non-clerical staff.” That’s a fairly simple concept which wouldn’t seem to need much amendment, and then we get to the “office of the Premier.” “Premier” is a fairly simple concept; there is only one in the province. It changes from time to time . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Currently, I believe, not in the province. And I suppose the word “office” is capable of some possible (although I doubt it) degree of ambiguity, although I must say that one would have to put more work on trying to find out what’s ambiguous on this than it would be to answer it.

I think the point I make is that many of these are things which might easily be answered as questions. They all relate to the current one financial year and I’m sure the list of non-clerical staff in the office of the Premier will not be long, so it would be a matter simply of disclosing the information forthwith.

The particular point I wish to make is that we are not looking for this information for estimates. We are now in estimates. We are not, true, in the estimates of Executive Council but we will be in the estimates of the Executive Council shortly. If we delay the passage of this until next Tuesday, when we will be through a fairly substantial amount of our estimates no doubt . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, I promise.

We have already agreed, Mr. Speaker, in response to the interjection, that we can facilitate the department of telephones and the public and private rights board and

Provincial Secretary . . . showing the Provincial Secretary that there will be no lingering over his . . .

But I can't say the same for the office of the Premier. I am unable to give that assurance, although I am not saying that it will necessarily go on long. We have a large number. Some of them can be provided very quickly; some of them not. If we don't get the answers to them in response to questions, which we are unsuccessful in doing, or orders for return, which looks like we may be unsuccessful in doing, all that results is that when the estimates come in we say to the minister concerned; would you please give me the names and the salaries of each executive assistant or special assistant? All that does is take a good deal of time in the House, which I think might be more profitably used elsewhere . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

I am sure that it has crossed the minds of all of us that some of the speeches of members on all sides didn't represent a great contribution to the business of the House. But I think that it would contribute even less to the business of the House if I had to ask or someone has to ask the Minister of Culture and Youth, for example, the names and salaries of each executive assistant, special assistant and other non-clerical staff . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

I am sure there's no problem, but if there's no problem in saying so there's no problem in putting it in print and I am suggesting therefore that we do expedite it. I am not pushing the point to suggest that we should have it now. I am pushing the point to say that if we delay passing the orders until next Tuesday, it will take some days to prepare them, and we will probably not get them while estimates are on and we will probably take more time on estimates than would otherwise be necessary.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I am urging the government to adopt this motion and selectively throughout the list adopt motions which will provide information which is requested, thereby expediting the business of the House when estimates are before us.

Mr. Speaker, I so move.

HON. MR. ANDREW: — Mr. Speaker, in response to the hon. member's request, I can advise that we are attempting to pull this information together. I am sure we will provide it to you with all due haste. We do have to look at the mechanism of putting it together and getting that, in fact, down and whether we can exactly do it in the given forms of each particular motion for return and whether we can, in fact, deliver the goods as to the way the information is. We can assure you that that type of information will be made available to you. We have nothing to try to hold back from the public with regards to that. I think, as the former premier is aware, a lot of this type of appointment is an OC type of appointment and that information is also public. But just simply to request, Mr. Speaker, so that we can clarify that, get that job done and insure that we can answer according to these things, I would ask that we have to determine whether or not small amendments to the request be implemented and in that regard, Mr. Speaker, I would beg leave to adjourn debate with regard to this motion. I wonder if at this point in time I could respond in the same way now to motion for return no. 17, no. 3 on the list, down to no. 58 and we will try to expedite and get that information. I can give the members opposite that assurance and I'm sure that information will be available to you or very close to it. That information will easily be obtained in estimates and I think, clearly as flagged, that's a question that's going to be easily asked and can be delivered.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, with leave of the House and in response to a

request from the Minister of Finance, and on the assurance which he has given to the effect that every effort will be made to expedite the providing of this information, I would suggest if our rules permit that number 3 to 58 be stood, and I think that is as I understand their request.

Debate adjourned.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Berntson that Bill No. 45 — **An Act to establish a Program to Facilitate Financing the Purchase of Farm Land** be now read a second time.

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Speaker, I have a few words that I'd like to say on Bill No. 45. I'm looking at the bill. We can see that there are a good number of problems with the bill, and if a person went and looked at item 2 on the bill you could see that in this bill just about everything is left to regulations. There is nothing within this bill that states what the farmer is going to get when he buys the land. There is nothing in this bill that states that he is going to be charged 8 per cent for the first five years, or 12 per cent for the next five years. Everything in this bill is left to regulations, Mr. Speaker, I think that one would almost have to say that even the definition of a farmer is left to be defined by regulation.

It has left all of the powers, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. The minister will decide whether the farmers qualify for a subsidy. He will decide whether they even are considered a bona fide farmer. And when all of that power is left to regulations it would almost make a person wonder whether the minister will even decide who may be getting this subsidy — the interest subsidy.

The bill in item 1 is called The Farm Purchase Program Act. I think it was a little deceiving too, because there is nothing in the bill that states that this government is going to provide financing for the farmers in order to purchase this land. This bill is merely an interest subsidy bill. That is: all that they are going to do is subsidize a portion of the interest, and the money is to be provided by the FCC, the farm credit corporation.

Again, Mr. Speaker, you have some of the members there saying, "Good bill." Well I think that the farmers out in the country look at this bill, especially some of the farmers that it is supposed to be directed at and that is the land bank lessees, I think that they will find that that bill is not a very good bill for them . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . And the member for Saltcoats to my left here says, "They trust us; they trust us."

Well, Mr. Speaker, I think that would remain to be seen in the future. Right now they don't have much choice but to trust you, and hope that you will come up with a bill that is somewhat better than Bill 45 or even Bill 46. Because in Bill 45, as I mentioned before, there is nothing that really tells the farmer what he can expect. Three hundred and fifty thousand has been mentioned by the Minister of Agriculture; it really says nothing in the bill about the amount of money that he is going to get, or the amount of money that he could borrow. It doesn't say how it is going to be handled. There is absolutely nothing in this bill, Mr. Speaker, that would indicate that the farmers of Saskatchewan are somehow going to benefit with this new program.

This bill and the comments of the minister are very deceiving, especially the comments of the minister. He has been deceiving the public every time he has made a speech, be it to the wheat pool or be it in the House. He has virtually deceived the farmers of Saskatchewan and the public of Saskatchewan with this bill. He has been saying that he is somehow going to supply them with funding. He has been saying that he is going to supply them with funding to purchase land. When we see the bill, we see no money in this bill that is going to be provided by the Minister of Agriculture for the purchase of land. Another very misleading statement by the Minister of Agriculture.

In the bill it also says that treasury board will be making regulations respecting the accounting for fund moneys. The treasury board — again, everything left to regulations, to be decided either by the Minister of Finance or the Minister of Agriculture. I don't know really who else they might choose to make some of the decisions as to how the farmers will be affected by this bill. They say that they will be providing a subsidy for the purchase of farmland, an interest subsidy, and that's what this bill should be called. But when you look at 2(c) in the bill, it says that they will be providing that funding

“farm land” means agriculture land in Saskatchewan exclusive or any improvements which may be on the land:

So if a farmer goes and buys a quarter of land for (using round figures) \$100,000 and there are \$50,000 worth of building assessed on that property, what the minister then is saying is that it is very likely he will not be subsidizing the interest of \$100,000 but he will be subsidizing the interest of only \$50,000 because he leaves that to his discretion. He can make that choice.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of other problems which are very evident in the bill, problems that are going to affect the young farmers who are hoping to purchase some of the land. And many of the problems really aren't even in the bill because as many of the problems that are in the bill — a good number of them are not in it.

One is that a farmer cannot have a net worth of more than \$300,000. Now, \$300,000 at today's price of land could be a half-section of land plus a very, very limited amount of equipment and that will put that farmer out of eligibility. It will put him out of the eligibility bracket for any rebate in this bill — a half-section farmer. And, if this bill is going to be helping land bank lessees and half-section farmers, the first problem is that those farmers will not qualify for a loan through FCC. I see no guarantees in this bill that the minister is going to co-sign for these farmers to get their loan through the FCC, because the FCC regulations would require that he has some repayment capabilities. And on a half section of land (if that is all he buys), he will not qualify for an FCC loan. Again, Mr. Speaker, a bill which says a lot, really does nothing for the farmer. It does nothing for the people that this government is saying it is supposed to be helping. They talk about 20 or 5,000 farmers or whatever the minister has been saying recently. I think if they could find 500 farmers that would qualify under the criteria in this bill, they would be lucky. So they will not be too concerned about the amount of money that it is going to cost them, because it would probably cost them very little, Mr. Speaker.

Today's paper, a nice article:

Government official says farm purchase plan figures grossly inflated.

Well, Mr. Speaker, after looking at the bill I can understand that those figures are grossly inflated . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . My colleague says there is no money, and that is true. This government is not putting up any money. It's asking farm credit corporation to go and put up the money. It's asking farm credit corporation to put up the money. It's asking farm credit corporation to put up the money. But what is this government going to do? Are they going to put any money into it? Yes, they will. They'll put some in if that individual qualifies. If he qualifies they will put some money in.

But when you look at all the regulations in this bill, I think we're going to find that not many of the farmers are going to qualify unless they are established farmers. That will pretty well rule out a good number of the land bank lessees. It's going to rule out a good number of the land bank lessees. And at the pool convention not that long ago when the minister was asked whether there was some protection for the land bank lessees and whether they would be able to qualify to purchase that land if all they had was land bank land that they were working on, the minister wouldn't comment on it. All he would say is, "When that act is introduced, I'm sure you would be very pleased with it." Well, Mr. Speaker, for one . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order! Being 5 o'clock I leave the chair until 7 p.m. this evening.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.