

EVENING SITTING

MOTION UNDER RULE 39 (continued)

National Railway Dispute

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Thank you. Before we broke over the supper hour, Mr. Speaker, I worked through the events in so far as our Premier's efforts – and successful I might add – in terms of having the federal government act, and act quickly, in the event of a railway strike. And we have seen Mac Carson and Bill Kelly put in charge to bring both sides to the table, and hopefully we'll see something conclusive come out of that.

I think the reason why this is such a critical issue to Saskatchewan has been articulately laid out by speakers before myself, Mr. Speaker. And the issues are well-known across Saskatchewan because of the fact that so much of our resource goods – products, commodities – move by rail, whether it be the forest, or the grains, the oil seeds, potash, all those. Because of the importance of those, the reasons are well-known why this is such a critical issue to Saskatchewan.

And I have to compliment particularly my colleagues: the member from Morse; the member for Thunder Creek; the member for Kelvington-Wadena; in so articulately laying out what the implications are of a rail strike, or certainly a prolonged rail strike, to our Saskatchewan economy and particularly our farms. And numbers like in the grains and oil seeds sides, our shipments to other parts of Canada or outside of Canada run in the neighbourhood of \$3 billion a year; potash, 650 million to a billion dollars a year, depending on the year; manufactured goods, Mr. Speaker, run anywhere between 775 million, \$875 million in any given year. So what we're talking about here is several billions of dollars, and when you're talking several billions of dollars, and when you're talking several billions of dollars, every day is a critically important day to the western Canadian economy, to the Saskatchewan economy.

It's a critically important day to all of those in the farm service industries or the forestry service industries, whose livelihoods depend on those primary industries. So it's not just those in the primary resource sector, it's also those who work at the secondary level. Because what we would likely see, Mr. Speaker, for example, in the forest products side as shipments are decreased, sales are lost, shipments are terminated – we would probably see some lay-offs back up the system, as we could well expect in others: the elevators, for example, people being laid off by elevator companies.

And this time of year, of course, for our ranchers to move into the fall . . . The red meat industry, our ranchers – although with our move to diversification we're seeing less and less of our calves moved to Ontario – but certainly although the truck has become very popular, we still see at this time of year a fairly substantial movement by rail of calves to feedlots, particularly in Ontario.

And I can't help think, given that I was myself this past weekend down at the farm and had a chance to get on the combine, how many farmers must be sitting on their

combines this very day listening to what has happened and contemplating the devastation that a railway strike will have on them. There they are, sitting on their combines harvesting a crop that for the most part is below average across the province – although there are spots where it is very good – a crop that is below average, a crop where they have seen the prices fall even since last year another 23 or 25 per cent; their input costs for the most part are either level or at worst rising, certainly not coming down; not much in the way of quotas, Mr. Speaker; at every turn, everywhere they look, there is not particularly good news on the horizon. And then to get this additional news as they sit on their combines taking off this harvest, knowing that they may or may not be able to sell that crop and if they do, at a very low price.

And you can't help but sympathize for them because it's not only sort of the financial aspect but after a while it becomes just one more emotional straw and after a while you sort of get the sense that, how many straw can our farmers take psychologically, Mr. Speaker, without sort of feeling totally defeated and overwhelmed by a system that just does not seem to give them any breaks?

And so as I contemplated this motion, I couldn't help but sympathize because there are a goodly number of those farmers on swathers and combines this very day listening to the news on an hourly basis in so far as, if I do get this crop off, well it probably won't got anywhere anyways – and the utter despair they must feel, some of them.

And that's why when I listened to the debate, and it started off in question period today with the Leader of the Opposition. How disappointed I have been at what the NDP has raised. Because here is an issue that is so critical to Saskatchewan, so large to our economy and to its people, that you would have thought for once we could have stepped above mere partisan politics, Mr. Speaker. And that's what was so disappointing about the debate this afternoon coming from the NDP.

The NDP have made this a partisan issue. They've polarized the issue into two dimensions and as I've said many times in this House, it behoves us as legislators, given that the issues that we faced today are so complex, to do something more than reduce every issue to a simple duality. It is not good enough to reduce every issue to an either, or; them, us; right, wrong. It is not good enough to reduce this to an issue where it's railway companies – you're for them or agin them. And that's exactly what we saw trotted out by the NDP opposite, Mr. Speaker.

And I'm not here to make the case for the railways. Certainly they can speak for themselves. But what I think we are all here for or should be here for is to look at this in a reasonable, calm, studious, and thoughtful manner and to look and see what would make sense and what would be fair, Mr. Speaker – not only fair for the workers and their spouses, whether they be wives or husbands at home who, I'm sure, do not want to contemplate the thought of a major wage earner in their family being on strike for two or three or six months. That is not what . . . I'm sure there are housewives, or on the other side of the coin, there are husbands who do not want to have their families face that. And that is not what the workers want,

nor is it what our farmers want, or our potash mines, nor the people who work in the . . . mill operators in our forest products, Mr. Speaker. But what they do not want is to have issues categorized and polarized into this simple duality of right versus wrong.

As I said earlier, the NDP typically . . . I mean, this is classic socialism, Mr. Speaker. It has been for 50 years in this province as far as the CCF-NDP are concerned. I mean, if you want to sort of be seen to be on the side of the public – never mind looking at the debate in a thoughtful or studious fashion – if you know one thing that works, just slam the railways. And I mean I'm not, and as I said, here to defend the railways. But aren't we above that and beyond that finally, Mr. Speaker, in this day and age? That's old-fashioned sort of typical socialism and I think we have come some distance, or we should have come some distance from that.

That's why I was so disappointed to see, for example, the member for Regina Centre. I mean, what was his solution to this complex problem? His solution was, well nationalize the railways. I mean, that's a typical knee-jerk reaction. That's typical. The only answer is this hard and fast socialism answer – and if it moves, nationalize it. If it moves, turn it into a Crown corporation, because that is the best. A typical response, Mr. Speaker.

And then we had several members, and particularly, I suppose, the one from Moose Jaw North. Here was the classic example of sort of the sanctimonious speech. But at the end of the day what he came down to was, have you seen CN's profits? I mean, let's kick the railways around, let's kick their profit line around because that is the root of all evil. They're this big corporation; and have you seen their profits? Well I don't know what their profits are, Mr. Speaker, but I have no doubt that if one was to look at their return on investment that they would probably argue – I don't know, rightly or wrongly – but they would probably argue that it's pretty measly, their return on investment. Mind you, I would argue equally hard, Mr. Speaker, that our farmers' returns on investment are pretty measly. And I raise the point not to suggest whether they are right or they are wrong, or whether the profits are large or they are not, but the issue is simply once again of, here we have a case of simple railway bashing. Polarize the issue. Either you're for them or against them. The railways are the bad guys and that's all there is to the debate.

And then he brought in another favourite bogymen of the NDP in this debate, in that the Tories here have to be suspect, Mr. Speaker, the Tories have to be suspect in how they would approach this, federally, provincially, or wherever, because, my goodness, they get donations from Canadian Pacific or Canadian Pacific Express or whoever.

Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, I am getting tired of that kind of insinuation coming from the opposition benches. Because what that does is it strikes at the moral integrity of every member of this legislature, to suggest that somehow, because we get a contribution or our party does or the federal party does, that that warps my thinking, Mr. Speaker, or that somehow I collapse under the weight of knowing all of this and it fogs up my mind in so far as making rational, reasoned, thoughtful, studious

observations.

And I know why they think like that, Mr. Speaker. I know why they think like that, because that's maybe the way they respond in those kinds of situations. But I resent the insinuations because I think it reflects on every member of this legislature, Mr. Speaker – every member of this legislature.

The Leader of the Opposition today in question period came at this from a unidimensional aspect again, Mr. Speaker. And the comment was made from a member's seat, "Don't you care about the farmers?" I mean, I think what the issue there was is a question of fairness and balance. There is no need to make every issue one of winners and losers; them, us. There should be all winners at the end of the day, I think, is one of the . . . maybe perhaps it was my colleague, the Minister of Transportation talked about.

We're not looking for losers here; we're looking at what is right for our entire province. And isn't that our obligation? And I couldn't help but think when that comment was made from the seat that how true it was, and it brought back to me, Mr. Speaker, the shades of yesterday when we sat in this legislature with the difficult task of legislating the dairy workers back to work. And when everyone across the province would be looking for fairness and reasonableness and balance in their approach, not one member opposite, Mr. Speaker – as you probably well remember – not one member opposite, not the agriculture critic, not any of their members opposite, got up and uttered the word "farmer" during that legislative debate. Not one of them could sort of stand back and say, on the one hand, we must, as we always must, appreciate the rights of the workers. On the other hand, not one of them would get up and acknowledge, but what about the farmers, and what is this strike going to do to them and to their farms and to their families? Not one word, Mr. Speaker. They sat on their hands through that entire debate and only pushed one line. They could not stand back and look at this in the larger perspective.

(1915)

And I wouldn't mind that, Mr. Speaker, if they really had the workers' best interests at heart, but they do not. It's the union bosses who pull the strings and call the shots, Mr. Speaker. That is the problem. Because we are all interested, I hope, at the end of the day, and the workers here, whether it be the farm worker or the potash worker or the railway worker . . . They want to look at this in only the one dimension, reduce it all to a simply duality – always have winners; always have losers.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that what the larger public policy issue – and the Leader of the Opposition addressed this, touched on this to some limited degree – the larger issue here for all of us, the larger public policy issue here is, how do we address the issue of change in society?

Here we have, and rightly so, railway workers threatened by, in their minds, some unforeseen or in some instances, some foreseen technological change. And how we will we

adapt? Shall we stick our heads in the sand and say: whatever you do, there shall be no lay-offs; I shall have job security for ever and for ever – albeit that they are still working the tracks with those pump what-ever-you-call-them that they used to use 50 years ago, Mr. Speaker – that at all costs, we shall have no change.

I mean it's not surprising that this is what the NDP...the perspective they took in this debate. Coping with change is never easy. It must be coped with fairly, that we know for sure, Mr. Speaker. That we know for sure.

And I'm not so sure...And I don't have all the details, but I'm of the view, at least I've been led to understand, that, for example, Canadian National has a provision where they do ensure job security after eight years due to technological change.

And it seems to me... I don't know if that goes far enough or whether it's right, Mr. Speaker, but it certainly flies in the face of merely thumping on the railways because they contributed to somebody's campaign coffers or that they made a profit or whatever. It's a dimension that's worth looking at and talking about, getting down to the meat of the issue rather than just thumping the same old drums.

I think we saw the same thing, as I understand it, and the members of the SaskTel unions had visited with me when there was strike action contemplated there. They were concerned about job security in the face of technological change. And as I said, as I understand it, CN has a provision after eight years that there will not be lay-offs due to technological change.

But that's quite different, Mr. Speaker, from a company recognizing that they too must change and how do they best help their employees change from an attitude of... taking the other position of, there shall be job security, period – no ifs, ands, or buts. Now then, the question there becomes: and is that reasonable? I mean, is the thoughtful approach on that one, is that the best answer; is that the right bottom line? I think not, Mr. Speaker.

Certainly as my colleague, the member from Kelvington-Wadena, pointed out earlier in the debate today, there are lots of farmers across this province who would like guarantees in lots of areas – working hours, working conditions, salaries, etc., etc. but such is not to be the case.

But of course, rightfully so, the railway worker may argue, well, that is his cross to bear. And so it's not as though one wants to reduce that into an either/or situation. As well, it's a matter of looking at the question of job security and approaching it in a reasoned and thoughtful manner. And I would suggest to you that it's worth knowing – at least I think it's worth knowing, when this House contemplates this motion about some of what is going on now relative to job security.

As well, the Leader of the Opposition, I think, made some comment about CN being... not meeting its targets. And rightfully so, perhaps. And I don't know what the details were. He did not point them out, as to why they didn't meet targets and they were 3,000 and-some-odd cars

short. And that's fine to point that out, I suppose. I think I could find numbers... For example, at Prince Rupert last year CN put 1.3 million, 1.4 million tonnes, something of that order in there. This year they're 4 million tonnes. Sounds to me like that's performance.

Now I'm not saying that that by itself is good enough, but I'm saying for an example that you can use to find the railways aren't meeting their targets, well, I can find examples where they probably exceeded everybody's wildest expectations. So that, too, is not the issue and a simple railway bashing exercise serves no one well.

I think as well in this debate, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's worth knowing. As I mentioned earlier, there are certainly some spouses that would be concerned, I think, with a lengthy strike, as I'm sure they are. There are others, I think the train dispatchers, for example, who were in conciliation, and now whose talks have been suspended because of this strike – certainly I'm sure they are concerned with what might happen. They were obviously on a course that they thought would lead to a successful resolution, and now that has fallen off the tracks, if you'll pardon the pun, Mr. Speaker.

And I raise these issues not because, as I said earlier, that I think that if anybody needed, the railway needs a spokesperson, because they do not. But I think we haven't examined all dimensions of what some of these issues are. We only see the single dimension that the opposition put forward, Mr. Speaker.

And I started out to say that the real issue here is change, things like technological change and how do we cope with it. And, Mr. Speaker, isn't this so reminiscent of the debate that we had in this legislature during my estimates when we discussed how is our education system going to gear up to handle the change that comes with the technological era, or the information era, or the knowledge-based economy, as some call it. You see, so the issues, Mr. Speaker, are not all that different.

And, in fact, it seems to me if I was to make some suggestions to people like the railways in this country, if I was to make some suggestions to them, Mr. Speaker, I would tell them that they ought to seriously look at helping their employees retrain and upgrade and get the skills required to operate a transportation system that will take us into the 21st century. That's what I would tell them. I would say that they have absolutely a corporate responsibility. It is in their best interest to make sure that their employees have every opportunity available to upgrade, retrain, or to gain the new skills for the new jobs in the transportation system of the 21st century, Mr. Speaker. That would be my view, Mr. Speaker.

Now the NDP's approach would be to say: don't touch anything; give them guarantees; let them become non-competitive. If that is the final price you must pay and the company must go broke then they say, so it shall be. Well, I ask you, Mr. Speaker: who is well served? Who is well served if the railway company goes broke and the employees are without a job and the farmers have no rail line to serve them? No one. No one is well served, Mr. Speaker.

But what we are looking at here, if I could use an agriculture analogy for a moment, is if we are to be change resisters like the NDP — change resisters. They have become the establishment man of Saskatchewan politics, Mr. Speaker. The reform party, the CCF grass roots reform party, is now your classic establishment proponents: do not change; keep us with the status quo; we are the change resisters.

And, Mr. Speaker, I ask you: where would our farmers be today? Would our farmers be shipping? Would our railways, on behalf of our farmers, be shipping? Would the wheat board and the railways and our farmers be shipping 32 or 33 millions of tonnes, even with these trade wars on, if they had adopted the attitude and the mentality of the NDP? I think not, Mr. Speaker. Because where would our farmers be today if they had said when the Massey 44 tractor came along, if they'd gone out to the 12 hired men out there and said, well guys there's a new Massey 44 here but I know if I get that tractor I won't need six of the horses in that barn? Well, I better not do that because old Dobb, he might not like to be turned out. So I'd better keep the horses and let the Massey 44 stay in the shed. Now I ask you where would our farmers have got if they'd left the Massey 44 out in the shed and relied on horses when the rest of the world that was producing the wheats like we were, Mr. Speaker, would have made that change.

Or where would they have got, Mr. Speaker, if they'd have left the Massey 44 in the shed, and not taken out the new four-wheel drive, or not looked at the new hybrid grains in some instances? Where would they have got?

And I raise those examples, not to point out that change is easy, because it is not — it never is — but that is the issue here. And what these people are trying to decide in these negotiations is how best to accomplish that change, how best so that we can protect our workers; more than protect our workers, Mr. Speaker, isn't the issue, how do we help them?

There's no sense having people trained to drive horses when you need them to drive tractors, and the similar analogy would be . . . I would use in the railway, the strike that faces us today. Because the reason that they fear, as I would . . . that they want job security is that they fear for livelihoods.

So should it not be our obligation and the obligation of the railways to help them with that change and to make sure that they are technologically upgraded, Mr. Speaker? Because if the railways can't make these changes and if the workers can't fill the new jobs that they need, then we are not all well served because there will be no railway there and there will be no workers and there will be no farmers who can ship their grains on that.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, I think that at the end of the day what we all ask for here is for these workers to have the kinds of things that all of us would aspire to, to have job security, if you like. But it's no good just to reduce it to a simple duality, as I said earlier. Certainly as I understand as well, they would like an increase.

In this debate, I think it's worth pointing out, Mr. Speaker,

that although we all would like wage increases at any given time, the way the legislation is enshrined today and the controls put on railways, if there is an increase in the workers' salaries, costs of labour, that's factored right back into what the farmer pays, Mr. Speaker. And I think any of us in this House would be hard pressed to argue this very day — this very day — for increases because of the situation facing farmers and potash and potash miners and forest products — and the list goes on and on and on. That doesn't mean to say that there shouldn't be pay increases when times improve, Mr. Speaker, but certainly at this very day, it's hard to argue that case and especially if we are to look at the entire province.

The final point I would make here, Mr. Speaker, and the one that I would particularly want all members of this House to support, is the issue of 72 hours. That if there is no solution, that we look at, as the amendment says:

That should a negotiated or mediated settlement appear to be unachievable after 72 hours, (the federal government) to move immediately to take such legislative action as necessary to resolve the dispute.

And I think that's a particularly important amendment, Mr. Speaker, for these reasons, in that I don't think, as I said earlier in this House, that the housewife or the husband of the railway worker who sees this, is now part of this strike, I don't think that they're interested in seeing this thing go on and on and on for ever either.

The hon. member has tried to suggest, particularly the member from Moose Jaw North, that this was the only agenda that this . . . I think, to use his word, the only agenda that this fit was the railways' agenda, and once again that's a simplification of a complex issue. But it seems to me, if I was . . . And let's use the example of the housewife. If I was a housewife of a railway worker sitting at home, would they not think it reasonable of this legislature to suggest if they cannot make it work in this last set of negotiations and after 72 hours of intense negotiation, then perhaps there needs to be something more done? Now it seems to me that would be reasonable, as opposed to letting go on for 3 or 4 or 5 or 6 months.

If I was that person at home tonight watching television and they saw that come out of this legislature, I would think that the average person, their spouse and the worker, would say, well at least it'll get settled one way or the other, and reason will prevail. And that seems like a reasonable . . . From the worker's standpoint that seems to me ultimately reasonable. The hon. member suggests that it's only the railways' agenda.

The other test of fairness here, it seems to me, would be: is that fair to the rest of our province and to its people? Should our farmers, our potash miners, our forestry workers — should they be left out on an economic limb that's about to snap for weeks and months on end? And I think not, Mr. Speaker.

So I think that that motion, that amendment, makes eminent good sense.

On a final point, Mr. Speaker, there are many issues surrounding this strike. It is a complex issue. Merely categorizing this and saying that either you are for the railways or agin them, would be an oversimplification, and the issue would not be well served. And similarly, those who would try and drive a wedge in this issue between the railway worker and the farmer, the railway worker and the potash miner, the railway worker and the mill operator in the forestry area, similarly would be doing a disservice to all involved and to this province, Mr. Speaker.

(1930)

We dismiss issues in that fashion by making them all a simple duality too often in this House. As I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, and I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, the larger issue here is one of change, and how do we adapt to change. How do we deal with the technological age? And I've talked about what I think are some corporate responsibilities, corporate responsibilities to their people. Because one thing we know for sure, Mr. Speaker, is this: is that the population is getting older. There is not a second so-called yuppie wave coming through the system. So what I say to Canadian National and Canadian Pacific is that they had better look after their workers because there is no other wave coming along behind them to replace them. That we know for sure. And yes, they may well need skilled workers and workers to be retrained to make them efficient and to compete.

I think CN, for example, Mr. Speaker, at one time was in the top five in terms of output per worker and now are down at 20 to 25. Well there may be lots of reasons for that but I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, and to them, that one of the best things that they could do is to make an investment in their people to help them cope with the technological change. And that doesn't mean that we get into this silly simplistic notion of job security at all costs, under all scenarios, etc., etc. The reasonable person doesn't want that, nor do they expect it. What they want is help to deal with the issue of change because that's what causing uncertainty.

What we're talking about, Mr. Speaker, is how our people cope with the implications of the new economy. For all these reasons, Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the motion, as amended – when it's amended — Mr. Speaker, and I would urge all members of the legislature to do the same because it's in everyone's best interests.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on the motion which I moved, and I hasten to add that I'm not going to speak on the motion but on the amendment which is before us, and I will confine my remarks to the amendment.

I must say that a number of the comments made by the member for Weyburn were tempting, but I have had my opportunity to speak on the motion and will confine myself to the amendment.

An Hon. Member: — Why don't you let somebody else have their turn.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, I hope that this debate will continue just as long as possible and that all hon. members, and particularly the member for Kindersley will have an opportunity to address the Assembly.

But right now, with his permission and with yours, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to speak to the amendment.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — A point of order, Mr. Speaker. There's always been a tradition in this House that when people wish to speak to a motion and an amendment, that the people that haven't had the opportunity to speak are recognized first, not somebody that goes for the second time on the same basic issue and the same motion on the same day. Now that's a tradition.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to speak to the point of order now that is before us, and all I want to say is that if some hon. members wish to get into this debate . . . I looked and I didn't see any competition. And if some hon. members wish to speak, while I don't for a moment accept the point of order raised by the member for Kindersley – and I say it is no point of order – I will be happy to defer to hon. members who may wish to speak.

Mr. Speaker: — I listened to the hon. member's point of order and the hon. member's . . . the Leader of the Opposition's response to it. But the rules indicate that anybody who has spoken to the main motion may also speak to the amendment. And the Minister of Justice was not raising that particular point, I realize that – he was saying that if somebody else was standing, it's the practice of the House . . . To my knowledge, I don't know if that is the practice, but having said that, I didn't see anybody standing at the time.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, I want to assure all hon. members that I'm not going to speak long and there will be an opportunity for members to speak.

I stand in opposition to the amendment. Obviously, I will be supporting the motion which I moved and I speak in opposition to the amendment because of the reasons which I earlier gave of the desirability of a negotiated settlement.

I favour a negotiated settlement, both on principle and because of the circumstances of this particular dispute. I favour a negotiated settlement on principle because in my judgement, labour-management disputes are best settled at the bargaining table between employer and employee. They have to live with the settlement and it's better that they arrive at the settlement. And I think that this is a strong point to be made and a strong point to be made in any industrial dispute – if at all possible, make the parties strike a bargain. Then they will feel committed to it; then they will feel committed to live with it.

In this particular dispute, it is particularly important that we have a negotiated settlement. And this is true because

the nub of this dispute is not wages or hours, which are relatively easy to saw off for an arbitrator; but rather the issues are job security and the difficult problems which the member for Weyburn has outlined. No one is suggesting that all jobs should be retained. In fact, everybody agrees that this is not the case. And therefore, ways have to be found to down-size the work-force that the railways have employed. They have to deal with early retirement, with pensions, with bumping, and with all the problems that come with down-sizing. And those are intricate and the sort of thing which can best be dealt with at the bargaining table and not by an arbitrator after 72 hours or any other given time.

Now just to make clear that we are dealing with the intricate problems of down-sizing – and in my judgement those ought to be dealt with at the bargaining table if at all possible – I point out that we have had a very major down-sizing of work-forces over the past 10 or 15 years, all of which have been bargained out and by and large have been lived with even though they were very difficult for individuals and groups in the railway labour force.

I pointed out earlier that the car men, a particular group of employees, have seen their numbers drop from 14,000 to 7,000. Every second car man is gone and this was done without any work stoppage. It was bargained out and worked out. We have seen other major technological changes. We've seen the switch from box cars to hopper cars and we've seen track abandoned and we've seen trains get longer – I don't want to dwell on all of those things except to say that the major issues which these have posed over the last 15 years, resulting in reassignments, lay-offs, early retirements and the like, have been dealt with at the bargaining table. And I'm not at all sure that those issues lend themselves easily to arbitrated settlements. So I have a very strong preference for a negotiated settlement. And in my judgement, of course, Mr. Speaker, the amendment will make a negotiated settlement much more difficult to bring about. There is no question of that.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Once one sets a deadline in the manner that the amendment does it seems to me that you make a negotiated settlement a good deal more difficult. This is a sort of dispute which almost quintessentially should be solved at the bargaining table, because of the many intricacies of it. It's not the sort of issue which we can say: you people are asking 6 per cent; we're offering 3; let's make it four and a half. So you can't do that with the intricate patterns which must be developed to have a fair down-sizing. And all of us, I think, are agreed on the fact that there will be down-sizing in the labour force who work on the railroads – and I hope we all agree that this has got to be done in a fair way. Once we make those two assumptions, which I hope we all agree with, then the trouble starts so far as finding the pattern. And I think that we are not going to get an arbitrator, however wise, to find the right solutions to those sorts of problems. He can certainly try, he or she, but I would much prefer the parties to solve that one themselves. So I favour a negotiated settlement. And as I indicated I believe that this amendment stands in the way of a negotiated

settlement.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am troubled by this amendment in another way. I had hoped that this House would send a message – a unanimous message – to Ottawa. The resolution which I introduced was framed in a way which I think could not be taken objection to by anybody in this House. And indeed, in the amendment, not one single word is deleted. I felt it was something we could all agree to and I felt it was important that we show that on the issue all legislators in Saskatchewan, and virtually everybody in Saskatchewan, is in agreement. Because I think that's important.

And reference has been made to whether or not this should be a partisan issue. I can assure all hon. members that if I had wanted to frame a partisan resolution I could have done so. But I framed one which I felt nobody in this House could take objection to, and in fact nobody has taken objection to it. I felt it was important that we put forward this resolution and debate it – again, in the words of the member for Weyburn – in a reasonable, calm, studious, and thoughtful manner. And we hope we are doing that. And I hope I am now doing it. Well, we are – I think we want to pass the original resolution, and I don't see anybody demurring on that score.

And then when we come to the amendment, we ask ourselves what is the nub of the amendment. The nub of the amendment is that it seeks to tell the federal government how to go about solving this dispute – how to go about solving this dispute. If you do not have results within 72 hours then you should do this. That's what it says to the federal government.

Members will know that the federal government is a PC federal government. Members will know that I had many, many differences with the Mulroney government. But I think this is no time to raise my differences with the Mulroney government. This is the time to say to them, please turn your mind to this serious national issue. Use your best judgement. We won't try to second guess you. See if you can get this thing solved and solved quickly, and Godspeed.

(1945)

Now that's what we tried to do. The amendment does something very different. It says: and in case you don't know what to do in Ottawa, we will tell you from Regina. In case you don't know what to do, we will tell you what to do.

Now I think that we should rely in this case on the federal government. I believe the Prime Minister of Canada has some knowledge about labour-management relations. We have never, I suspect, in the history of Canada had a prime minister who had more experience in how to deal with labour-management relations. We have an assistance deputy minister of Labour, Mr. William Kelly, who is probably as skilled a mediator as there is in Canada, and they are turning their mind to the matter.

Now, I want you to think about that for a minute, Mr. Speaker. We have a Prime Minister who, undoubtedly, knows more about labour-management relations than

any other prime minister in the history of Canada, and knows more about labour-management relations than most, if not everybody, in this House. And we have Mr. William Kelly, who is undoubtedly a more skilled negotiator than anybody in this House, and may well be than anybody in this province. So they are turning their mind to this issue.

And what should we tell them? I say we should tell them, use your best judgement; it's better than our judgement. We'll tell you what result we want achieved. You use your judgement to get there as fast as you can.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm not likely to stand in this House and tell Wayne Gretzky how to score goals. I'm not likely to stand in this House and tell Tim Raines how to play baseball, or Tom Clements how to play football. And if I did — and if I did — those people would laugh at me, and they would be right to laugh at me because I don't know how to score goals, to put it mildly. I don't how to score goals as well as Wayne Gretzky or play ball as well as Tim Raines or play football as well as Tom Clements.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, I don't know how to solve industrial disputes as well as Brian Mulroney or William Kelly. And I'm not going to tell them how to go about dealing with this issue because they would rightly laugh at me, and so they should, because that is not my skill. And if I have any skills, it is not in that regard, Mr. Speaker. And I'm not going to make a bigger fool of myself than I sometimes do by advising those people how to go about solving a labour dispute that they have been close to and I haven't been close to.

And I think we ought to not, I think, sully our resolution, which I think is an important resolution to get to the Government of Canada, by attaching to it some conditions which make us very nearly the laughing stock of anybody who is dealing with labour-management negotiations.

We want the Prime Minister to get on with the job of solving this. We want him to use his best guns — people like William Kelly. But I don't know whether it's going to take 48 hours or 72 hours or 96 hours. And I don't want to tell him, well, you've got 72 hours and after that it's high noon and we are shooting.

That is not reasonable or sensible or productive. We ought to give our full support to the federal government. We ought to say, you people please get at this; see if you can get a settlement. And we ought not to tell them how to do it. We ought not to tell them how to do it.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — And I think, Mr. Speaker, I don't think they will pay attention to our resolution because they will know that it is not put forward with a view to solving the dispute, but with some other objective in mind. They would know that however skilled the member for Kelvington-Wadena may be, they don't regard him as an expert in solving labour-management

relations, and his view on the matter is not to be accorded very much weight when we're dealing with a very serious national problem like solving a national railway strike.

So I would like to think that we would back off on this; that we would defeat this amendment or have it withdrawn, as the case may be, and we would send a resolution to Ottawa that we could all agree on. And I suspect there would not be a member of the House who would vote against that resolution, and say to Brian Mulroney, the Prime Minister and his cabinet and his staff, get at it; solve this problem; do it the way you think best because you know best in this area. Godspeed. And if, in fact, you need to do something legislatively at some future time, well that will be a judgement which you should make and not we. That has to be done in the face of all the facts at that time and not now.

And accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I find myself unable to support the amendment, would urge hon. members to defeat the amendment, or alternatively, the mover and seconder withdraw it so that we can send our resolution to Ottawa — which everybody in this House will have supported, and thereby underline the importance which we give to this serious national problem which is having an effect on our economy and which if prolonged will have a very serious effect on our economy.

This is no time for dividing ourselves, particularly on the basis of giving advice which we are not qualified to give. This is the time to unite and I invite all hon. members to do so. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. Order.

Mr. Muirhead: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is with pleasure, Mr. Speaker, that I rise to speak on this debate, but I'm also saddened of the quality of debate which I've heard from the opposition members today.

Mr. Speaker, as I drove into Regina today with my wife I said to her, it's not hard to see what the question period and the debate, debate number 39 would be today. The members opposite naturally have to talk about the railroad strike. They have to.

But I said to myself, Mr. Speaker, that if they do so they are hypocrites because, Mr. Speaker, they have been . . . All, most of my life, since the early '40s, I have heard the CCF and the NDP state very clearly that they are the union people of this country and that is correct, Mr. Speaker. So really what they done is they had to bring this question, these questions, forward in question period to make it look good to all the people in Saskatchewan that they're on everybody's side, Mr. Speaker.

They tried very hard to prove to the farmers that, we're on your side, but they didn't do a very good job, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I travelled this last year throughout the province of Saskatchewan, it's very easy to see where the members opposite stand. Some people say, Mr. Speaker, that the last election was a tough election, but in rural Saskatchewan it was the easiest, just like taking candy from children. Because these are the kinds of things I

heard out there, Mr. Speaker. This is the kind of things I heard: NDP . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order, please. Order, please. Order. Order.

Mr. Muirhead: — We heard very clearly, Mr. Speaker, that NDP farmers said it was not time for a Blakeney union government. It was time for Devine. Now that's what happened all over this province. It's very clear that farmers lined up and said in this province that it's time to be behind Devine, and that's exactly what they're doing, Mr. . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. I'd ask the hon. member please not to refer to members in the House by their name.

Mr. Muirhead: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was just referring to election time, what they were saying – not in the House, Mr. Speaker – but I apologize.

The farmers in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, will be wondering why they called an emergency debate today, and they'll be calling it hypocritical, Mr. Speaker. They know the NDP are the union party and the Tories are the party for everyone. We believe, on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, we believe in governing for every citizen in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. Order, please. Order. The hon. member for Arm River is attempting to state his views on the amendment, and I would ask the hon. members to give him that opportunity to do so without interrupting him every few seconds.

Mr. Muirhead: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that some of the things I've said and some of the things I'm going to say will upset the members opposite very much. But I did give them the courtesy for 40 . . . pretty near 60 days in this House of never heckling once. So I ask the same courtesy from the members opposite.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Muirhead: — Mr. Speaker, the members opposite do not understand the farmers' problems in the 1980s. They don't understand. They don't understand that a grain truck in 1980, '81, '82 . . . but in 1987 you get exactly half the dollars and cents. They don't understand that. They don't understand that a farmer out there cannot pay his bills today. They don't understand that. But the people on this government side do understand that, and that is why we're in this here debate today. They're the union people; we are the farmers' people, Mr. Speaker.

But what they do understand, Mr. Speaker, they understand socialism over there. They understand what socialism and unions are.

In England, Mr. Speaker, after the war, England had a labour-socialized government. They were knocked down, battered into the ocean, Mr. Speaker, because of the war. And a socialized-labour government was good for England. But, Mr. Speaker, many free enterprises throughout the world stated that England would be in

trouble in 25 years with a socialist government, and this is what happened to many governments throughout Europe at that time with a socialist government because, I wish to state here, Mr. Speaker, that socialism does not work without a hard-working free-enterpriser to pay all the bills.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Muirhead: — Mr. Speaker, it is not the time for strikes. I agree, Mr. Speaker, with the member from Moose Jaw South and the member, I believe it was from North, I believe, Regina North, when they were talking about the problems that the railroads are having like cabooses and things like that. I agree these little things should be cleared up and they should have their rights, but they're making such an issue of it. They seem to think that a caboose, whether it tags on or whether it don't, is more important than moving grain for farmers. That's what they believe, that's the issue.

Well, Mr. Speaker, what they . . . What I don't believe in, and I stand here proud to say that I do not believe in guaranteed job security. Mr. Speaker, I do not think that any MLAs, elected people in this room, are guaranteed their positions – not one of us. But if we keep on having debates like we did today, I'll say that the members opposite will sure be looking for a union job because they'll have to, because they won't have a job in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Muirhead: — The members opposite, Mr. Speaker, they believe in no lay-off guarantees. They believe in this – they really believe it.

Mr. Speaker, I have a few comments from a few items that I picked up through the supper hour that I just want to share with the members of the legislature here. But firstly, the Leader of the Opposition stated in question period – I wish he was here but he'll hear about it – that the Transport minister, John Crosbie, wasn't interested in strikes and doing anything about it. Let me quote. This is from *The Globe and Mail* today:

Transport Minister John Crosbie, said the federal Government will review the situation today to determine what action to take "to protect the public interest."

"The strike is very costly not only for the parties immediately, but in this case for all of Canada," he said in a statement in Ottawa.

An Hon. Member: — Misleading.

(2000)

Mr. Muirhead: — Misleading is right, Mr. Speaker. The member from Kindersley said misleading and I agree with him. Misleading – trying to mislead all of Canada. And also, Mr. Speaker, he said in question period today that the farmers could stand to have the movement of grain stopped for a few weeks without hardship to them, Mr. Speaker. Let's just quote him some information because

he does not understand what he's talking about. "Grain shipments affected." Let's put this on the record.

During late August . . .

Excuse me, Mr. Speaker.

During late August and early September, an average of 3,000 cars per week are shipped out of Saskatchewan. This translates up to 300,000 tonnes of grain per week that will not get into the grain export market until the strike is settled. At current grain prices, up to 50 million per week will be delayed returning to the Saskatchewan economy.

Now don't anybody tell me that a farmer can stand this, Mr. Speaker, because they cannot. The business people of this province cannot stand it either because they're affected every day by what the farmers have for income.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Muirhead: — I'll read some more implications that we'll put on the record here, Mr. Speaker.

The railways stand to lose \$20 million per day in revenue. There will be almost immediate detrimental effects on Canada's agriculture and resource industries. The inability to move grain coupled with the already very low grain prices could have disastrous effects on Saskatchewan's agriculture economy should the strike be prolonged.

Now if the member from Elphinstone was here; maybe he would realize that he made a mistake in question period today.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, two times now the member from Arm River has referred to the fact that a certain member was not present in the House. I'm given to understand that such comments are out of order, and I would ask you for a ruling in this respect.

Mr. Speaker: — The point of order as stated by the member for Regina Victoria is, in fact, well taken. There is, in fact, a rule that indicates that the member should not refer to the absence or the presence, as a matter of fact, of hon. members. So I would just ask members to follow that rule, please.

Mr. Muirhead: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize that the member opposite is absent from the House.

Mr. Speaker, just a few more quotes from *The Globe and Mail*.

The workers with eight years service or more could not be laid off for technological, operational, or organizational reasons. Economic reasons such as a decline in traffic were not covered. However, the unions want no lay-off guarantee expanded to include all reasons and to apply to anyone with four years service or more.

We want protection for these railway workers. We're talking about workers with 25 or 30 years service. Mr. Passaretti said, adding that the current wording is too loose. Anyone could say there's a traffic fluctuation tomorrow morning, and bang — there's a lay-off. The unions say they have lost about half their membership on the railways in the past 15 years, and that management's desire for an even leaner work-force can be taken care of through attrition, early retirements, and with contract changes that give the railway greater flexibility to redeploy surplus workers. But management officials repeatedly used the phrase "economic suicide" yesterday to describe the consequences of tougher no lay-off guarantees.

The following headlines, Mr. Speaker, appeared in the *Leader-Post*, March 21, 1985. Mr. Speaker, I ask your permission to use their names, because these are quotes from papers: "Ned Shillington fears weakening of unions."

Allan Blakeney said in the *Leader-Post* November 10, 1983: "Organized labour has to become more militant."

From the *Commonwealth*, September 12, 1969:

Central to the creation of an independent socialist Canada is the strength and tradition of the trade union movement. By strengthening the Canadian labour movement, New Democrats will further their pursuit of Canadian independence.

From the book *Canada — What's left?*, Elwood Cowley. Many members opposite know Elwood Cowley.

The government employees union wanted to bring in three professional bargainers. Catch me drunk at night and negotiate with me by myself hoping I'd signed a contract without knowing about it.

I conclude, Mr. Speaker, that the NDP needs to enter into a dialogue about the content of future NDP government policy. The union movement is an integral part of the NDP, and I think the unions and the NDP are natural allies.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's time to ask the leadership hopefuls over there to stand and let us know who they support. The member from Riversdale has an obligation to let us know. Maybe as does also from Regina North, Regina Lakeview, Saskatoon Nutana — I'm sure they're going to run for the leadership. Why don't they stand up, Mr. Speaker, and say are they for unions or farmers, Mr. Speaker. I challenge the leadership hopefuls to come into this House and stand up yet tonight and say are we for farmers or unions. Now we want that said here loud and clearly in the province of Saskatchewan so we know where the members opposite stand.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it is not only their friends in Toronto . . . They themselves have a hard core of big labour advocates sitting on the benches. They have the big labour lawyers, the member from Riversdale. The

member from Elphinstone, he hasn't been a lawyer for awhile, but he's sure been around. The member from Quill Lakes, the member from Regina Centre, all labour lawyers. The member from Regina Centre . . . I probably missed some but don't feel too bad. Then they have the member from Saskatoon Fairview who thought people should vote for him because, as one of his election ads said, he worked for the international labour organization.

And then there is the member for Regina Rosemont who said during the election campaign that he was working as a representative for the Retail Wholesale and Department Store Union. But that is not all, Mr. Speaker, that's not all. We have the member for The Battlefords with his connections, he was the vice-president, Mr. Speaker, of the Saskatchewan Government Employees' Union.

And perhaps the real clincher, Mr. Speaker, that tells you that those people are of a party of big labour unions and not of farm families is shown by the background of the member for Regina North. His claim to fame, Mr. Speaker, is that he was a member of the executive of the Grain Services Union that has, on a number of occasions, held farm families hostage, just as they're being held hostage today.

A Member: — Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. Order, please. Order, please. What is the member's point of order?

Mr. Shillington: — I do not see the connection between these remarks and the subject of the discussion.

Mr. Speaker: — The hon. member is speaking to the motion, and I'm sure that he must have some connection to the motion in his remarks, and I ask him to tie his remarks into the motion, if they so are pertinent.

Mr. Muirhead: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Everything I've said today, Mr. Speaker, if the members opposite would just listen, and not be disturbed, connects farmers and unions.

So I ask them again, Mr. Speaker, explain how you can ask for this debate? How can you do this and then tell farm families that you have to stick up for financial backers in big eastern unions?

Now, Mr. Speaker, we would welcome the NDP turning over a new leaf in joining with us in protecting the average Saskatchewan family.

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. Order, please. I'm having a little difficulty listening to the member's remarks which are obviously quite interesting because many members seem to be taking note of them. So, please, allow the hon. member to continue and refrain from interrupting.

Mr. Muirhead: — But they have to be sincere, Mr. Speaker. They have to be very sincere if they're going to get their points across, and they haven't been doing that today.

We can take them very seriously about legislating the rail workers back to work when the most recent addition of

their party newspaper just published the results of their policy convention. I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, after I read this there'll be more points of order because they don't like hearing this stuff. But they were quite proud when they passed this resolution at their own meeting. It's one of those resolutions, Mr. Speaker. The resolution's number was SJ26 which condemned the use of legislation to end strikes. Calling such action, and I quote, "unnecessary and politically inspired."

Well, Mr. Speaker, tell me. Tell me, Mr. Speaker, what was the sense of them standing here today asking for government intervention? What was the sense of them doing that, unless they knew that when negotiations were finished there had to be legislation in place to end this here strike that the people in Canada cannot stand.

So I think we can see who was acting on purely political basis when we see the NDP standing up today asking for an emergency debate and then we find out what they are passing for party policy behind the backs of the Saskatchewan people.

Mr. Speaker, the member from Elphinstone stated very clearly that he would all members here to vote for the main motion, and not for the amendment.

Mr. Speaker, I state very clearly that the amendment is the reason why we're still talking here at 8 o'clock tonight. This is the main reason. Because we all on this side of the House, I'm sure everybody in this province, believes in negotiations. But this is not 1977, it's not 1967, or '57 or down. This is 1987, where we have a crisis in North America, where people, Mr. Speaker, are having financial implications that they cannot cope with.

So if we have anything delaying the pocket-books of people; anything that affects them at all, Mr. Speaker, we have to deal with it. Now, no one believes more than me, Mr. Speaker, that there was a time for strikes. When the unions were first formed in this province, I believed in them, and I believe in them today. But I do not believe in them on ruling Canada. And that's what they've got so strong that they're taking over and want to be the big bosses of Canada, and that's where they're riding on the backs of the NDP, and they're all together, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to make it very clearly before I sit down that I'm asking them to decide before they vote tonight whose side are they on, the farmers or the big union bosses of this province, or this country of good Canada. Whose side are they on, Mr. Speaker? Because I'm going to vote for the amendment. And it was a pleasure to speak, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Indeed I'm also happy to enter in this debate this evening, this emergency debate on the rail stoppage. I was interested in listening to the member for Arm River and I was afraid for a moment you might cut him off before he mentioned my three years on the bargaining committee and the executive of the Grain Services Union. I thank the member for Arm River for that, and I guess that gives me a very clear union tie having been serving three years there.

But I can only assume from that logic that I am six times as qualified to speak for farmers of Saskatchewan because, Mr. Speaker, I spent 18 years on a co-op farm in Saskatchewan; and 18 is six times what three years is.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — Indeed, Mr. Speaker, before I leave the member for Arm River, before I leave my comments on what the member for Arm River said, I just want to make a comment that it is not the wittiest speaker we've heard today. He's a little bit short of that, only about half-way in fact.

Mr. Speaker, we're addressing tonight a serious subject, that of a work stoppage in the rail workers. And I want to point out to the hon. members that while there is a work stoppage, the rail workers have absolutely no income. None. Because there's no wages paid when there is no work being done. So, no income, indeed, while this work stoppage is taking place, Mr. Speaker. That is providing an immediate incentive for the rail workers to get on with a negotiated settlement. That's what the rail workers want; that's what we want; that's why we're standing here and saying, let's give the negotiation process the opportunity that it so richly deserves.

Mr. Speaker, the work stoppage, if it continues for an extended period of time, will indeed cause some export loss, some of which will be permanent loss. Some may be just deferred delivery or deferred purchases on the part of other countries. But I spoke earlier today to a high level person with Saskatchewan Wheat Pool and I was told at that time, Mr. Speaker, that there is currently roughly a 10-day supply of grain at Vancouver, at the west coast, and there is, indeed, more grain stranded en route now, on the railways.

But as soon as the work stoppage ceases, that grain, some of which is already on the way, will just continue on and start arriving very, very shortly thereafter at the grain terminals on the west coast. So there's a 10-day stockpile, if you like. There's 10 days before we're in a real crisis situation in Vancouver. And in Thunder Bay, we're okay for a substantially longer period because there's much greater storage in Thunder Bay.

(2015)

I was also told there is currently room in most prairie elevators for grains coming in, but the Canadian Wheat Board has not announced a delivery quota. They had not announced it before the work stoppage, and we were speculating on the telephone that they will not likely announce a quota now, either. So we've got 10 days, Mr. Speaker, before the impact of this work stoppage starts to seriously impact on our export market.

I was also told in that conversation, Mr. Speaker, that the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool very clearly is standing, along with the National Farmers' Union, very clearly standing up and saying they want to give both parties an opportunity to reach a negotiated settlement. The reason for a negotiated settlement is then . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. Order. Order. I think that, you know, for about the last hour or so, we've had interruptions from both sides of the House, and I would just like members, now, to kind of stop that and let's allow this debate to continue. It's a serious issue and we're going . . . (inaudible) . . .

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate your comments to the members opposite.

So the wheat pool and the farmers' union want a negotiated settlement so that both parties will feel an obligation, and indeed they will want to make the settlement work.

The mischievous political amendment is wrong-headed, Mr. Speaker. This political amendment that we're debating right now removes this debate from an all-party emergency resolution which was put to this House in a reasonable manner so that all hon. members from every party here could support this and this motion go on in a unanimous manner to the federal government so that, as the Leader of the Opposition pointed out in his comments just moments ago, we would allow the federal negotiators, who know what they're up against, we would be sending them a message that, yes, we want you to negotiate, and we want you to negotiate hard and fast. Get this dispute settled as quickly as we can. It's a matter of extreme urgency to Saskatchewan and to Saskatchewan family farms. That was the resolution we put forward. Now there's a mischievous amendment to it that just negates any opportunity of there being unanimous consent in this House and the motion being passed unanimously.

So what's the situation, Mr. Speaker, with the railways? After 14 years of labour peace — 14 good years of labour peace at the railway — well with CN, in the first quarter of this year, they made a profit of very nearly \$18 million. Canadian Pacific, in the first quarter, made a profit of nearly \$24.5 million, and in their second quarter, CP made a profit of \$61.5 million. Mr. Speaker, CN's second quarter statement is not available. I'm not trying to withhold something from the Assembly, but I don't have access to the second quarter CN earnings.

The total profits . . . The point I'm making, Mr. Speaker, is the total profits for CN's first quarter and CP's first two quarters of this year are up from a total of \$39.6 million in the same period in 1986 and they're up to over \$103 million in the same period in 1987. So despite the fact that railway profits are up more than 150 per cent this year over last, over the same period last year, despite that, the railways are very clearly saying that they are not willing to discuss job security and pensions in any way with the rail employees, the rail workers.

This is going on, Mr. Speaker, despite the fact that rationalization of rail workers has been occurring for decades now, not just a few years, but indeed for decades.

The Leader of the Opposition, again, earlier today pointed out that railcar workers in numbers have gone from 14,000 to half that, or 7,000 workers over the past decade. It's a very serious erosion of railcar workers'

earning abilities because there's only half as many of them working now. That means there's 7,000 railcar workers that have now gone on and they are doing other things. Some of them may have retired, but many of them had to go on to other jobs.

Saskatchewan family farmers will very much appreciate the problems faced by working men and women in the rail industry in their struggle to negotiate job security and pensions because, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan's family farms are disappearing at an alarming rate today, right now with the Conservative government. They're disappearing because the federal and provincial Conservative governments have not addressed the very serious inadequate incomes that family farms have.

And just as family farmers are struggling to maintain their means of livelihood, so rail workers are struggling to maintain their very means of livelihood. And the Conservative government's attempts to pit farmers against workers, just simply put, will not wash any more — it doesn't work. Rail workers have got family and friends and relatives that are farmers and farmers have sons and daughters and friends and other family that are working in the railroads. Both farmers and workers are being squeezed from their source of income and their source of job security — farm families squeezed from their farms; rail workers squeezed from their jobs, as they're fired and let go, as the down-sizing of the rail employment continues.

Mr. Speaker, because of the loss of income for family farms in the agriculture industry and the rail workers and their families, and because the negotiated settlement is the favoured and the least acrimonious, therefore the most harmonious method of reaching a settlement, I cannot support the mischievous amendment to the motion.

No farmer wants to be told that he or she must accept a forced settlement on any issue. In the same manner, no rail worker wants to be forced into a settlement if a negotiated settlement is possible. So we are urging the federal government to get involved in facilitating the negotiating process. We want the Minister of Transportation and the Prime Minister to get directly involved to work for a negotiated rather than an imposed settlement.

Mr. Speaker, I have outlined why the rail strike will hurt rail workers through their total loss of income for the duration of the strike, and have outlined my concern, and I'm sure the concern is shared by many Saskatchewan family farms, as a lengthy work stoppage will lead to export problems at Vancouver within two weeks and at Thunder Bay some time after that. I have also outlined my support for the collective bargaining process as the much preferred method of reaching a settlement, so I'm in favour of the motion as put by the member for Regina Elphinstone and seconded by the member for Regina Centre. We are very much in favour of that motion, Mr. Speaker.

And for the reasons that I outlined earlier, I oppose the politically mischievous amendment that attempts to pit farmers against workers when both are simply struggling

to try and survive in these tough Tory times.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — Mr. Speaker, I will be voting against the amendment, and if the amendment is passed, I will vote against the mischievously amended motion.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, I want to make a few brief comments on this very important motion, and the amendment to the motion. Let me first refer to the member from Regina North.

Not two weeks ago, maybe three weeks ago, in this House, members of the NDP stood in their place for the first time, I think, in 40-some days, and that was their first agriculture question. And they said, please, Mr. Premier, phone the boys down in Ottawa and tell them to extend the quota. The Premier says, I'll do what I can. And he phoned them after that question. And, in fact, there was an extension.

Now here is the member from Regina North standing up and saying in this House: not to worry, if the trains don't move for three weeks, well it will be okay; I talked to the guys in the wheat pool and they said it'd be okay. I can't believe, Mr. Speaker, somebody in a province like Saskatchewan, I can't believe somebody in the province of Saskatchewan who says that he was raised on a farm, co-op farm, to stand up and say, we can take a three-week strike, boys; it won't be any problem, and what the farmers are telling me is, stand up for them, stand up for them poor railway workers.

Well I don't know whether he comes from the same part of the country that I do, but that's not what the people are telling me. Mr. Speaker, what is really at stake in this particular issue? What is at stake, as I understand from press reports, is the members of this particular union want to have job security after having worked for the railway for four years. If they have four years employ in the railway, they cannot be laid off for no reason whatsoever, including downturn in the economy or anything else — four years. That's like saying, get elected into this legislature; four years later you will have your pay for the rest of your life, whether you have work or not. That's exactly the same thing we're talking about.

Now we know in this province that our farmers rely on the railroad to move the grain. And what we are talking about today is some union people that work on the railroad, whose average income exceeds that of our farmers by five times or perhaps 10 times, and they're standing out there saying, well we don't want too big a raise — just a small raise. I heard a guy at supper time on the news; just give me a small raise, but give me that job security so they can't let me go.

And I suppose somebody's going to go to our farmer and say, we'll just give you a small raise this year and nobody can have . . . nobody can take anything away; you're got security of that farm and that income for the rest of your life. Doesn't work that way, Mr. Speaker. But the members opposite, when it comes down to picking and

choosing, when they come down to picking and choosing . . . And you saw the Leader of the Opposition today – not one word about farmers. In a province like Saskatchewan, not one word about a farmer. What did he say? He said, we have to stand up and support the people that work for the railroad. They're only asking for something that is job security. They're only asking for – if he was really to tell the truth in this Assembly – they're only asking for total security after four years of employment on the railroad.

Now why should they have a better system than anybody else? Does that work in anything else that people are employed with in this province? Not on your life. And is it likely to? Not on your life. Then how can we, how can we as a society that has to go out into the world and compete . . . Our farmers have to compete on the world to sell their product. If the railway says, too bad, we want to keep putting the price up higher and higher, how do we compete and how do our farmers compete?

And why, at some point, don't the members opposite ask themselves that question? And it's no different for the potash producer; it's exactly the same thing if the price goes up, or the forest industry. We have to take our produce to the world markets, and very often that product must go on the railroads. Now what it has to be, Mr. Speaker, is it has to be relevant to where we are . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order, please. The member is certainly stating his remarks here with enthusiasm, but we can't hear if we have a cross-fire going on between two other members. So I'd like to please ask you to respect that and allow the Minister of Justice to continue.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — I appreciate, Mr. Speaker, your comment to the member from The Battlefords, who seems to be constantly doing that when that comes up. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, let me . . .

An Hon. Member: — Point of order.

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. What is the member's point of order?

(2030)

Mr. Anguish: — I'm sorry that there's been such an interruption to the hon. member. I was carrying on a dialogue with the member from Meadow Lake, who had instigated the whole thing, and I hope that you would take that into consideration when ruling on your point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: — I've listened to the hon. member's point of order. And I think the point of order simply serves to highlight again my asking of the co-operation of all members to just allow the Minister of Justice to continue with his speech, and if we allow him to that, we won't have this sort of point of order having to be raised.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, I have only a few more things to say. But let me put it to you this way, the members opposite in all their speaking today have not made one observation, they have not spoken one word in

support of the farmer of this province, and that is sort of indicative of the way they look and feel toward the people of rural Saskatchewan.

Let me conclude by saying to this motion, Mr. Speaker, what this motion is saying is to get on with the job, but if you don't get on with the job and there's no resolve of it, then don't dilly-dally around for another two weeks, or three weeks. As the member from Regina North says, move on it.

That's what we are saying to Ottawa. Let's tell Ottawa, solve this thing in the next three days or legislate this thing back to work. And that's exactly what we should do.

And I don't suggest for a minute that it simply should legislate an arbitrator. It's high time in this country that the parliament stood up and said, look at, there's a dimension of the agriculture that's at stake here and you should be cognizant of that. There's a dimension of the resource industry that's at stake and you should be cognizant of that. And no group is going to stand in the way of fairness that they have to compete on the world market.

I say to the members opposite, you can vote against this amendment, you can vote against this amendment – you will vote against the amendment. I will challenge you to stand here in your place here tonight and vote on the motion as amended. Because I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, exactly what they are going to do. I can see it all now. What they are going to do: they will stand up and droll out in the next speaker, and he will droll and droll and droll past 10 o'clock so it never comes to a vote. Never comes to a vote, Mr. Speaker, because they are not prepared, at any point in time, they are not prepared at any point in time to stand against their union friends if it means standing in favour of the farms.

Mr. Speaker, those people stand against agriculture. If it comes to a challenge between the agriculture and the railroader, they will take the railroader each one, each time. And they will stand for the farmer never, except when it's in the convenience of the NDP. Mr. Speaker, that's why the farmers spoke against that group in 1982 and 1986, and if they continue this way, the farmers of this province will speak against those people into the year 2000 and beyond, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon Mr. Andrew: — If the members opposite cannot appreciate what a rail strike means to the farmers of this province, they should be ashamed of themselves. They have been too long in this dome; they have been too long in this city, Mr. Speaker. Agriculture is so fundamental to this province and the movement of grain is so fundamental to agriculture.

I challenge the members opposite to stand in their place, to vote on the amendment as they wish, Mr. Speaker, but to bring that motion to the head, to a vote tonight so we can send that forth to Ottawa, give Ottawa the message where we stand. And we stand four-square behind the farmers of this province – always have and always will.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm not pleased to have to rise tonight to speak in this debate, to speak in the debate on an amendment which was put forward by the government, engineered by the Deputy Premier . . .

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — . . . for one particular purpose and one particular purpose only, and that is to bring partisan political politics to something which could have been a sign of unanimity to the federal government.

Mr. Speaker, I want to remind the members opposite, and I want to remind the viewing public out there, of how this debate started. It started when the Leader of the Opposition moved a motion which would have been accepted by each and every member of this Legislative Assembly. Each and every member of this Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker, would have sent the message to Ottawa that we want the office of the Prime Minister to intervene in this railway strike, to allow the two parties to come together to reach a mediated and negotiated settlement which will serve the interests of the railway companies, which will serve the interests of the railway workers, and which will serve the interests of all people in Canada.

But what did we get, Mr. Speaker, what did we get here? We had a partisan political amendment put forward by the Deputy Premier which would and will destroy the unanimity of the Legislative Assembly of the province of Saskatchewan. And why? Why has it been moved? I think, Mr. Speaker, if we listen very carefully to what the member for Arm River said, if we listen very carefully to what the Justice minister just finished saying, we know exactly why they want to do it. Both members said, you in the NDP have a choice to make. Both of them said, you've got to pick either the farmers or you've got to pick the workers. That's what they said, and that's why they're putting forward this partisan political motion. They say that it's either the farmers or it's either the workers.

And I want to say to you, Mr. Speaker, and I want to say to the people of Saskatchewan here tonight, we pick the farmers of Saskatchewan here tonight, we pick the farmers of Saskatchewan, we pick the workers of Saskatchewan because we're for our workers' and farmers' government here in this province which will solve the problems, not try to divide people like the members of the opposition have done.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — It is a partisan, it is a mischievous, and it does absolutely nothing for the credibility of the government opposite — absolutely nothing at all. And it speaks very, very poorly for the political judgement of those members in the back benches who are like sheep going to vote for this amendment.

Because if they want to talk about choices, Mr. Speaker, if they want to talk about political parties making choices, well then let's talk about a few choices that the members of the government party have made.

When it came to the Crow rate, when it came to defending the Crow rate, there was a choice that those members could make. They could stand up for the farmers of Saskatchewan, or they could stand up to the interests of the railway companies by destroying the Crow rate. What choice did they make? Who did they pick? They picked the rail companies over the farmers of Saskatchewan. And I don't want to hear any hypocrisy out of them on choices.

When it comes to variable freight rates and the introduction of variable freight rates in this province, there is a choice before the Legislative Assembly. There is a choice for those members to make. There were the farmers of Saskatchewan or there were the variable freight rates, and the rail companies which supported the introduction of variable freight rates.

And I ask you, Mr. Speaker, which side of the line did the members of the governing party pick? Did they pick the farmers of Saskatchewan? Did they? No. You're darn right they didn't. They picked the railway companies, again and again. It's the CPR and the CNR over the farmers of Saskatchewan.

When it comes to rail line abandonment, when it comes to rail line abandonment, the members of that party had a choice to make. They could stand up for the farmers of Saskatchewan and say our branch lines serve the farmers here. They make us competitively advantaged in terms of our communities; they make us economically viable in terms of rural Saskatchewan. It was a question of standing up for the rail companies who wanted to abandon those branch lines. Did they stand up for the rural communities of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker? Did they? No. No. They stood side by side with the CPR and the CNR, because Mr. Speaker, that's the history of the Tories. Standing shoulder to shoulder with the companies against the working people, whether they work on the farm or work on the trains or work in the cities. They'll pick the companies every time, Mr. Speaker, because they're Tories, and they stand with the companies.

When it comes to elevator closures, and the farmers of this province say, we want to maintain our elevators, what do the Tories say?

An Hon. Member: — Variable rates.

Mr. Lyons: — Variable rates, branch line abandonment. But the companies say we want the Cargills and the Peavies. And the Parrish & Heimbeckers say, no we're going to close down our elevators. There's a choice to be made. There's a choice to stand with the farmers of Saskatchewan, or there's a choice to stand with the elevator companies. Where do they stand? Do they stand with the farmers of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker? No. They stand with the companies, shoulder to shoulder, with the Cargills, the Parrish & Heimbeckers, and the Peavies, against the farmers of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, I don't want to hear any more hypocritical talk of it's either workers or it's farmers.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — Our party, Mr. Speaker, stands with the working people of this province against the companies that exploit workers and against those companies that exploit farmers.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — It is nothing but partisan political mischief and . . . (inaudible) . . . Mr. Speaker, but that's a political tactic used again and again and again by the Tory red necks, who in the beer parlours and who in the communities; nudge, nudge, wink, wink, them union boys is making too much; we gotta put them in our place what do you say, Jake? That's the kind of mischievous political rhetoric and political nonsense that we've heard out of the Tories — divide workers, divide farmers.

And we heard the Justice minister to his shame — to his shame — stand here and try to peddle that same political garbage which pits worker against farmer in this province. And I say to the members opposite, take another look at this amendment folks. Take another look at this amendment. We could have unanimity going to Ottawa. We could have a unanimous resolution saying that the people of Saskatchewan are concerned about the railway workers, the people of Saskatchewan are concerned about the farmers, the people of Saskatchewan are concerned with the manufacturers. You can have that resolution going to Ottawa or you can try to get through your partisan political amendment which will not have the unanimity of this legislature.

And that choice, Mr. Deputy Premier, is yours to make. And for once I ask you: please make a choice in the interest of all people in Saskatchewan, not your own little divide . . . (inaudible) . . .

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — Because, Mr. Speaker, there is abroad in this land a perception of the kinds of political partisanship being played by the Tories not only here in Saskatchewan but also in Ottawa. And that perception is that the Prime Minister and the Tories are trying to somehow create situations, trying to build a situation in a confrontation between trade unions on the one hand and the government or the people of Canada on the other, so that Brian Mulroney, who has at the bottom of the heap in terms of the political opinion polls, so that Brian Mulroney can somehow put forward the image of being a strong leader — he's a strong man, he'll stand up to the unions. There's that perception abroad, Mr. Speaker, and I, for one, hope that perception isn't true.

But when we look at the historical record of the last several years of this government and of the federal government, I want to tell you I'm not so sure it is true. We have seen just prior to the last provincial election, all of a sudden a manufactured crisis around the grain handlers strike, pardon me, the grain handlers lock-out initiated by the grain companies on the west coast. This was just prior to the last provincial election.

What happened, Mr. Deputy Speaker? What happened after the election was over? Did we have the crisis on our hands? Was there a massive crisis in terms of grain

handling on the west coast? No, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it wasn't. And why? Because there wasn't a crisis in the first place on the west coast, nothing more than a manufactured political event to try to give the Tories out there in the country another excuse to try to pit workers against farmers. That's the kind of political games that these people play, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and we've seen it here tonight.

And we don't have to go very far back, as far back to the grain handlers lock-out. We can look at the posties' strike — the strike of the letter carriers. Here we had a situation in which the Government of Canada tried to manufacture a political situation which would pit the post office against the letter carriers, those big bad eastern union letter carriers who happened to live and work in our communities here in Saskatchewan. But what happened? The Conservatives tried to play partisan political politics with that labour dispute, having the . . . ordering the post office for the same reasons that we've heard from the members opposite — rationalization, international competitiveness, all the buzz words which means lay-offs, and loss of jobs, and cutting and slashing, the kind of buzz words that they've heard.

Here we have, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Conservatives in Ottawa trying to manufacture a political crisis around the post office, except the postal workers weren't going to have any of it. The letter carriers, who hadn't been on strike for 19 years, said, we're not going to get pushed around. We're not going to be the pawns and victims in some Tory partisan political game. And they stood up to the post office and they stood up to Brian Mulroney. And guess who blinked? It wasn't the letter carriers — they didn't blink. But it was that strong, strong man who tried to manufacture that political crisis — he blinked.

(2045)

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what does that say about this particular labour dispute? We have here a major Crown corporation which acts under the authority of the Minister of Transport, the Hon. John Crosbie, a Minister of Transport who said, we're not going to get involved; I'm getting out of this thing; I'm going to be hands-off; who said he's not going to get involved.

We have the major transportation company, the Canadian National Railway, holding out against the demand for job security which it already has granted several of the unions in the associated railway union common front. It's not a question of whether the companies are for or against job security, it's the kind of job security which is at issue here.

And that's the kind of question which is best dealt with by a mediator, particularly a mediator of the stature of Bill Kelly, and not through partisan political games playing by the members opposite and pointing the 72-hour gun to the heads of the negotiator. Because the gun is pointed not only, Mr. Deputy Speaker, at the union's heads, it's also pointed at the heads of the Prime Minister. So if the back-benchers over there realize what they're voting for, they're telling Brian Mulroney: Brian, you've only got 72 hours; get off your butt or legislate them back to work.

And you know something? I tend to think that Brian Mulroney, that labour lawyer from Montreal, knows more about labour law and negotiating than the member for Arm River, judging from his comments, or the member for Kelvington-Wadena or the Justice minister. In fact, you know something, Mr. Deputy Speaker? I tend to believe that Brian Mulroney, the labour lawyer from Montreal, knows more about labour law and collective bargaining, and getting disputes settled, than the whole bunch that sits across there. Because I can't think of one. Not one of those members has been involved in the collective bargaining process. I can't think of one. And if there are any, would they like to put their hands up. I see the Minister for the Environment has been involved in collecting bargaining. I assume it's as a school trustee. I assume as a school trustee. And I'm sure that the Minister of the Environment knows that a 72-hour, when he was dealing with his teachers, what when he was dealing with his teachers, that a deadline of 72 hours given to the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation would be nothing more than a road-block – would be nothing more than another obstacle to overcome to reach a mediated settlement.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is despicable for the Deputy Premier to try to play partisan political games with this Legislative Assembly, with the members of his own party and all of us as hon. members here in the Legislative Assembly. And I think it's despicable that he'd play partisan politics with the seriousness of this, that this railway dispute may become. And that for him to put forward a 72-hour deadline to the parties is nothing more than throwing another road-block, in fact, in trying to overcome, overcome the road-blocks that presently exist. And I'm sure that they don't need another road-block, mister.

I just want to speak for a couple more minutes, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's clear what the outstanding issues are. It's clear that the . . . what the outstanding issues are. We have here a *Leader-Post* story, Monday, August 24, which outlines it very, very well and I think in a somewhat clear and objective manner.

This is the first rail strike in 14 years. The last dispute was a series of rotating walk-outs which Parliament ended with a back-to-work order. The contracts were settled through arbitration.

Settled through arbitration.

Today, as in 1973, job security is a critical issue.

We don't have in that a question of wages which the Justice minister tries to raise. Trying to . . . saying that, yes, here's those greedy union people versus you poor farmers. Because that's the image that the Justice minister is trying to paint, much to his discredit – much to his discredit not only as a Justice minister but also as a legislator here in Saskatchewan. Because that doesn't do anybody any good when you try to picture a union working person as somebody who makes five times more than a farmer.

First of all, I'd like to find out what the Justice minister meant when he said that the farmer makes five times less

than a railway worker. I know that the railway workers who live in Rosemont constituency who, on average, earn around \$15 an hour – when they're working, because they're subject . . .

An Hon. Member: — That's high.

Mr. Lyons: — That's high, that's high. But I've got shop craft workers and members of the running trades who live in the constituency. So the \$15 an hour, if they work full time during the year, is a little less than \$30,000 a year. And I don't think that the farmers of Saskatchewan begrudge anybody – I don't think that the farmers of Saskatchewan begrudge anybody for earning a little less than \$30,000 a year.

I suspect that the farmers of Saskatchewan, particularly the older farmers or those who've just left the land – and it's their sons and their daughters who are earning a little less than \$30,000 a year – I suspect those farmers say more power to them, because I think that they deserve the kind of life that I and my wife may never have had. I think that that's the real attitude of the farmers of Saskatchewan, not the kind of red-necked insinuations and innuendo being put forward by the members opposite, not that kind of divisive person.

But I know when I look at my own in-laws, my own in-laws who are retired farmers, and they don't begrudge their daughter who earns more than \$30,000 a year, they don't begrudge her that. And she's a teacher. And yes, she's got tenure, she's got seniority. She's got seniority and she's got tenure. And are the members opposite saying that the teachers of the province shouldn't have tenure? Are they saying that the teachers of the province shouldn't have that kind of job security? Is that what the members opposite are saying? It seems to me that's what they're saying.

Yes, and I see the member from Rosthern is nodding his head, yes. So I'm quite sure that the teachers in the Rosthern constituency will like to know that come the next election that their member is against them having tenure and against them having job security.

And perhaps, Mr. Speaker, if the member will stand on his feet at a later time, he'll get into this debate.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Why is the member on his feet?

Mr. Neudorf: — A point of order, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I've been listening intently to what the member from Regina Rosemont has been saying. And when he starts to draw me into his discussion when I'm having a private discussion here with the Minister of Justice and raises a point . . .

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Order. Allow the member to state his point of order and I will rule on it after I've heard his point of order. The member from Rosthern.

Mr. Neudorf: — . . . and purposely is by direct innuendo insinuating that I do not believe that teachers should have tenure. I object to that very, very strongly, and I wish that he would withdraw those remarks.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. It is . . . Order. The point of order is not well taken. It is a subject for debate and debate continues.

Mr. Lyons: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But I think it's important that the people of this province realize that beneath all the gobbledegook, beneath all the slick phrases, beneath all the nudge nudge, wink winks of "what I'm saying is not really what I mean," that beneath all that, the people of the province understand the political position of the government opposite. They're against job security, whether it's a teacher, whether it's a coal miner, whether it's a potash miner or an oil worker or a small farmer in this province, Mr. Speaker. They're against that kind of tenure.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — Mr. Speaker, when the member from Weyburn talks about, we must become internationally competitive and we must economize and we must rationalize, I hope the farmers of Saskatchewan understand this: that he's talking about you — that if you're not internationally competitive with the big corporate farms in this province, you're gone. That what the member from Weyburn really means. Do you understand that? That's what he understands.

There's an old saying put forward during the Second World War, Mr. Speaker, by the Rev. Martin Nymoller. And he said: first of all, when they came for the Jews, nobody raised their voice, and they were taken away. And when they came for the socialists and they came for the communists, nobody raised their voice, and so they were taken away. And when they came for the liberals, there was nobody left. There was nobody left to raise their voice. Well what, Mr. Speaker, is happening in this case . . . what happens in this case, Mr. Speaker, is when the . . .

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Order. I would ask members on both sides of the House to be quiet. Allow the member for Regina Rosemont to make his comments.

Mr. Lyons: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I paraphrased the reverend because I paraphrased it to draw this point, because we can say it another way. This is what the Conservatives are saying: when they're coming for your branch lines, we won't speak up for you, and away they'll go. When they're coming for your elevators, we won't speak up for you, and away they'll go. And when they came for the Crown rate, we didn't speak up for you, and away it went. And when they're coming for your little rural post office, we didn't say one word — not one word in 61 days of sitting in this legislature have the Conservatives raised one question about rural post offices. You can say that with a fact, Mr. Speaker: when they come for the post office, we're not going to raise a word.

And do you know why, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's their attitude? It's because they don't stand with the farmers of Saskatchewan, and they don't stand with the workers of Saskatchewan. They stand arm in arm, shoulder to shoulder, with the railway companies and with the banks

and with the large manufacturing, particularly multinational corporations, who are the ones who are talking about the international competitiveness.

And when they go to privatize the services of this province, which they're presently doing, whether it's health or education — and soon they'll try to privatize potash corporation and the prescription drug plan, and so on and so forth — when they privatize this, it's been all in the name of some great market law of international competitiveness.

So I want to say this again to the farmers of the province: the Conservative Party of Saskatchewan is raising a red herring. The railway workers of this country are not your enemy. Your enemy is the traditional enemy that has always been. It's the banks who've been foreclosing your land; it's the railway companies who are ripping your off when it comes to charges for your grain. It's the railway companies who have been abandoning your . . . have been taking your branch lines, and it's the elevator companies who have been doing you in.

And it's the Progressive Conservative party of Saskatchewan — that's who they stand for; that's who they've always stood for; and that's who they're standing for now.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, obviously I will not be voting for the amendment. And I tell you . . . I'm asking the Deputy Premier here, without any recriminations whatsoever, will you please withdraw that amendment so that everyone in this House can support the main motion put forward. And you can put it forward in your name, for all I care. You can put it forward jointly with you and the minister . . . the Leader of the Opposition, for all I care. But if we can send united a message to Ottawa that this is a serious subject, then we'll support it. But if you continue your political partisan games, let me tell you, the farmers of Saskatchewan are going to have something to say about that in three short years time.

Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

(2100)

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the original motion put forward by the Leader of the Opposition, the member from Elphinstone, and want to say clearly at the onset that this dispute must be settled, and it must be settled quickly, but it must be settled through the collective bargaining process.

What we have here, Mr. Speaker, is a classic dispute where the parties are dug in. The union is holding its position in terms of job security, and they should. The railroads are holding their position in the name of profit, and they shouldn't. And in between we have the farmer, the farmer who is struggling to survive, and the farmer who is caught in the middle.

Mr. Speaker, I understand all too well what it's like to be a

farmer in Saskatchewan struggling to survive these days. My family has farmed in this province for over 80 years, and I come from a farm background. My father and my brother and my sister are on the family farm today. Mr. Speaker, the cost of production per acre in our family farm is about \$72. This year they will be making \$62 on 25 bushels to the acre with the present price of grain. Before they've even sold the grain, they will have lost \$10 on an acre of land. That's a struggle, Mr. Speaker, it's a real struggle. And many farmers are in this same position. They are in the position that a year or two from now they may very well not be on the land because they can no longer afford to stay in farming.

Mr. Speaker, but I also understand what's happening to working people in this province. I represent a constituency that for the most part is made up of working people and retired workers who are in a situation, Mr. Speaker, where their job security is threatened, they don't know from one day to the next whether or not they are going to have a job. They are only one job away from unemployment. They are only one job away from the welfare rolls, and they are worried about their future as well, Mr. Speaker.

And so job security is emerging as a major bargaining issue in this day of collective bargaining – the major, major issue – because people, working people, have to be concerned about their future because they're in a position where they are not sure whether or not they are going to have a job. And I understand that, Mr. Speaker; I represent those people. But I also understand, coming from a farm background and having family members who are farmers, the plight of the farmer.

But, Mr. Speaker, I don't understand the position of the railroad. I do not understand that position. The railroad should be acting in the national interests of our country. But what are they acting in? They are acting in the interests of profit only. They want to maximize their profits. And I want to talk about what sort of profits the railroads have garnered this year. In the first quarter of 1987 the CNR grossed profit over \$17.7 million. The CPR, the Canadian Pacific Railroad, in the first quarter grossed over \$24.5 million, Mr. Speaker.

In the second quarter of 1987 they've grossed over \$61.5 million. With those kinds of profits, Mr. Speaker, do not the railroads have some sort of obligation to the working people in this country? Do they not have some sort of obligation to the people that work for these railroads in order that they can maximize those kinds of profits, because if it wasn't for the working people of this country, Mr. Speaker, the railroads would not have those kinds of profits. And I think the railroads should be clear on that.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — With those kinds of corporate profits I fully understand why workers want job security. I fully understand it. Mr. Speaker, the CNR plans to eliminate over 14,000 positions by 1990. That will reduce the work-force in that railroad by over 25 per cent. That's why we have these striking workers who are worried about job security, because the worry is very real. The CNR has said very clearly that they want to reduce the

work-force by 25 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, we already have over a million people in this country who are unemployed. We have had a situation in Saskatchewan where over 2,000 workers have been laid off by our own provincial government, and they're out looking for work. We have company after company that's going bankrupt, and there are workers out looking for work. We have people who are on welfare, who have never been on welfare in their lives because of the present economic situation.

And Mr. Speaker, we understand on this side of the House why it is that workers in this country, and workers in this province, are worried about their future in terms of job security. Wages are not the issue here. Job security is, and so it should be.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, I resent, I resent, as a person who comes from a farm background and as a person who represents working people in this province, the political wedge that you people continually try and lodge between working people in this province and the farmer in this province. Their interests are not different. Their interests are not different.

I want to ask those members, if they're so pro-farmer, why is it that they did not stand up to oppose the Crow rate? Why didn't you stand up? Tell me that. The Crow rate means larger transportation costs for farm families in this country – farm families who are in economic crisis. But they said absolutely nothing – absolutely nothing.

Why is that that they had an opportunity to fight against variable freight rates in this country, and they didn't utter one murmur? And that would have been in the interests of farm families. Why is that when post offices are threatening the possible closure of a post office in a rural community that they have absolutely nothing to say, and yet they say they're pro-farmer. Quite frankly, I'm tired of that. The interests of working people in this country and farmers in this country are not different; they are the same. And the enemy in this situation, the enemy in this situation is the corporate profit of the railroads. That's the enemy. They want to maximize profit, and that means doing away with the Crow rate; that means variable freight rate; and that means laying off 14,000 workers so that they can maximize their corporate profit.

And I want the people to be very clear, the members opposite. We had lots and lots of rhetoric today about competition. Competition, as though somehow competition was going to save our country from disaster. Let's understand what competition in this situation means.

Competition means larger farmers . . . or larger farms and fewer farmers, that's what competition means. Competition means fewer workers, job lay-offs; that's what rationalization and competition means. And I think it's really, really important that people understand that. Privatization means lower wages for working people, and working people in this country have seen their wages drop significantly. That's what happens in this country.

Working people are having a struggle just to make ends meet, Mr. Speaker. Working people have to pay mortgages; and working people have to put food on their tables; and now working people have to pay for drug costs up front; and working people have to pay higher power bills because of the political boondoggle that's going to be happening in the constituency of Estevan and Souris-Cannington.

Working people are struggling. And when working people say, we're not talking about wages here, we're talking about a job, Mr. Speaker, I can relate to that, and I think farm people can as well because most farm families have more than one or two children. Most farm families do not have all of those children taking over the family farm. Those children go to the towns and the cities and become workers. They make a living working shift work, and they make a living working from 8 to 5; they make a living doing all of those things that are necessary in order to keep this country running. And I think that it's time that in the interests of those working people that job security was an important issue and it wasn't something that we take very lightly.

Mr. Speaker, I can't possibly support this amendment that says that within 72 hours we will have to have some sort of legislative settlement here if the workers and the railroads can't arrive at some negotiated settlement. I think we put the working people and the unions and the railroads and the arbitrator, Bill Kelly, in a terrible position; we put a gun to their head. And I think it's important that we let the process take its course; re-evaluate this in three or four or five days. But at this stage they're meeting tomorrow morning at 9 o'clock.

I would urge the members to withdraw the amendment. Let the collective bargaining process take its course in the next day or two. Let's not be rash. I think the collective bargaining process is important, and I don't think it's up to the Government of Saskatchewan to interfere in that process because really they're little fish in the big game.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Koenker: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm pleased to enter this debate, particularly since a goodly number of my constituents in Saskatoon Sutherland are people who earn their living on the railroad.

I'm also concerned in this debate for the plight of Saskatchewan farmers since I work with farmers professionally myself and have done so more than half of my professional career. The press reports that I've read, Mr. Deputy Speaker, have indicated that both parties in this dispute want a settlement; that both farmers and working people would look for negotiations to settle this dispute. I think that Saskatchewan farmers want to see their grain moving again. As anyone in Saskatchewan knows, the railroads are the lifeline for Saskatchewan people. They brought the settlers here to settle the Prairies and ever since they've shaped the prairie economy. We only have to go into the coffee row of small town Saskatchewan to know just how vital this lifeline is for

Saskatchewan farm people.

Farm people know the importance of work, and they know and appreciate the efforts of working people for that reason. They work hard. And I think when they see people on the railroad working on their behalf to ship grain, they can appreciate those efforts.

I note with interest that in *The Globe and Mail* of August 19, CN Railroad laid off 19 yard workers in Winnipeg, sparking predictions that the railway could prepare to abandon its branch line rehabilitation project in western Canada.

And I think this is symptomatic of the kind of issue that we're discussing here tonight, and the kind of linkage there is between working people and farmers. Without rail line rehabilitation many small communities along the Carlton branch line for example, serving Laird and Waldheim and communities in the constituency of the member for Rosthern, would find themselves without rail service. Indeed that's the issue right now.

These rural people know what it means to have railroad workers rebuilding their line. And here we see that CN is laying them off. And indeed this is part of the issue involved in this dispute at the present moment. What Saskatchewan farmers don't want is an artificial wedge driven between themselves and working people. They don't need a railroad strike which polarizes them and railroad workers.

I think Saskatchewan people want a co-operative approach, not a confrontative approach. They want and need a federal government that is prepared to sit down and roll up the shirt-sleeves and jaw-bone well into the night, if necessary, and into the next day, and maybe into the next day and the day after that, without the constraint of 72 hours for a legislated settlement hanging over their heads.

And that's why we need negotiations to settle this dispute. And that's why the members on this side of the House are calling for negotiations in settling it, because we don't want a confrontative, hard-nosed, blind sort of settlement imposed by legislation. We see that there is a role for the federal government and the Prime Minister himself to encourage and facilitate negotiation.

(2115)

This is the call for negotiation that was behind our introduction of this motion, the impetus behind the original motion itself. It recognizes that the possibility of settlement, real, meaningful settlement, is in constructive discussion and in consultation, to build understanding and sensitivity to the issues involved.

And yet what we find in this amendment is the very opposite of that kind of consultation. It's a call for a legislated settlement, typical of the kind of confrontative or stance or mind-set of this Devine government. It sees the solution in bashing railroad workers or working people back into work, just as they saw the solution to the deficit problem with cutting and slashing in heavy-handed fashion, without consultation of the

people affected by programs like the drug program or the dental program.

Legislation in this sort of labour situation will never give a lasting settlement because the parties themselves won't feel part of the settlement, and they won't, in fact, be a part of the settlement. In a democratic society where we entrust the people to come up with a settlement, this is no real, durable solution.

It may be a Devine solution, or a PC solution, which is why it comes from the members opposite, but it's not a democratic solution. And the New Democrat members on this side of the House don't feel the need, at this stage in the game, for legislated settlement.

We would sooner trust discussion, and the issues involved are the very sort that need careful discussion where people can hear one another out, with time to clarify their stances on the one side and on the other side. An issue such as job security isn't as simple as it might have sounded or appeared to any of us here in the House. Security in the sense of contending with some of the pressures of down-sizing in the market-place and in the technological society isn't a simple matter of just keeping people or letting people go. It's a question more of how we integrate these technological changes and how we deal with these changes as a society constructively, respecting the people involved. And yes, respecting the profit of the companies that are managing the railroads at the same time but achieving a balance between these two objectives. And I think Saskatchewan farmers can appreciate that and do appreciate it. I think they can also appreciate when they're under very threatening economic powers in terms of the world grain market, the need for pension protection for working people to give them some measure of security in the face of the insecurities in the market-place.

So while job security and issues like pension protection are major issues in the face of down-sizing the railroads, it's interesting to note that at the same time the railroads are enjoying record profits. The men and women who are working to move grain then, Mr. Speaker, are working to move grain from Saskatchewan fields and farms overseas to feed people who are hungry. Saskatchewan farmers know that; I think they can appreciate that. They're looking for the movement of the grain again. I think they're obviously looking for railroad workers to get back to work, but I don't think they're in any undue haste to force them back to work, particularly if it doesn't lead to a durable, meaningful settlement, a real resolution of the issues involved.

And that's why, I think, that the amendment proposed is such a very dangerous amendment because it doesn't really get at the crux of the issue. It forces a decision headlong, in headstrong fashion by way of legislation, but it doesn't allow the very parties involved to integrate their attitudes and their insights with each other.

And so I will be voting against the amendment and against the motion itself. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, want to join in this debate, this very important debate, to add a few words. I don't intend to take a great deal of time, Mr. Speaker, but I think that the magnitude of what this particular debate and what this amendment has brought into what was a positive and constructive resolution is such that I think it impels me to make a few comments.

And I say this, Mr. Speaker, as a member who represents an urban constituency where the people who vote in that constituency and live there and raise their families are working people who work for wages and salaries. I also rise as a member who used to represent a rural constituency for 11 years, Mr. Speaker. And I know, as has been said by many of my colleagues here today, that the feelings of the people who live on our farms and work hard on those farms under some extreme difficulties, and the feelings of people who work in the cities who are their children and their sisters and their brothers, is such that what this government is trying to do here today is totally and completely cynical and unacceptable.

They understand, Mr. Speaker, the people on the farm understand the problems that people who work for the railways face when it comes to pay their mortgage, and the people who work on the railways understand what it's like for their parents who live on the farm and are facing financial difficulties today, because governments like this government does not provide adequate programs to provide them with the kind of guaranteed, stable income that they should have.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we're faced today with a situation which threatens to have some serious implications for Saskatchewan's economy. And I say "threatens to have" because it is not the case yet. There may very well be a settlement to this dispute and this disagreement. We don't know that. But we do know that with some actions that have been taken in Ottawa already, and the government opposite knew that, when they moved their amendment, that there is a mutual agreement by the railway companies and by the employees' representatives to sit down and talk some more. And that is happening tomorrow. And with somebody like Mr. Kelly involved, somebody who has had as many successes as he has had, I think that it's incumbent on this legislature to be able to say and give him the kind of opportunity to try to bring about a settlement without holding to his head, and the head of the Prime Minister and everybody else involved, the gun which my colleague from Rosemont spoke about. That is what I object to in the amendment that has been brought forward by the members of the government.

And I say, Mr. Speaker, that one of the reasons why this dispute reached the impasse that it did has to lie at the doorstep of governments like we have had in Ottawa and Saskatchewan in recent years because of the kinds of policies and attitudes which they have developed.

The members opposite try to make this as if it is only an agricultural problem, as serious as that is. And in Saskatchewan, because of the nature of our economy, we know how severely agriculture might be affected. But that is a simplistic approach. It is a simplistic approach that only a Conservative could possibly put together in trying to make their case.

The problem is greater than that, Mr. Speaker, and that is why we chose, as the members of the New Democratic party, to bring forward a positive resolution into this House at 2:30, because we wanted to give the members of the government an opportunity to join with us, and we would join with them, in taking some positive initiative to try to assist a settlement of the dispute that we have before us in this country today.

If ever there was leadership needed in Canada on the part of our Prime Minister, it is now. There is no other issue that is so important as this one at this particular time. And we felt, and I think rightfully so, that we should urge the Prime Minister and indeed encourage him to take that initiative and provide that leadership. And I regret very much that the members opposite chose not to join in that and decided instead that their only objective was to try to create political mischief, which is what we have here in this amendment.

They choose to take the same route as has been taken by the Minister of Transport in Ottawa who, instead of taking his responsibilities seriously, simply said that it's up to the railways to manage their business the best way that they can, and that he's not going to get involved. Now, Mr. Speaker, that is an abrogation of a responsibility that I think no one in Saskatchewan or Canada, be he farmer or worker or whatever, can accept or will accept.

Governments are elected to govern. Governments are elected to take some initiative when it's required. This Conservative government and the government in Ottawa has taken a different stance. They have decided that their only purpose is to gain power and benefit only a few, be it the railway companies, or the banks, or whoever it might be. And the way you do that is not provide government. We need government involvement. We need the leadership of our politicians at the national level to see if a solution to this can be brought about.

I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that this amendment is unreasonable and it has one other objective which I'm not sure has been mentioned in this House yet today. It is intended to inflame the situation which exists in Canada today. And why do I say that? I say it because, Mr. Speaker, I don't believe that that Deputy Premier or any of his colleagues on this side of the House want a settlement to be brought about because, as has been said by member after member . . . I was surprised that the Minister of Justice would get up and as clearly state what he said, because I have a certain amount of respect for him, in spite of his little airplane junkets. I was shocked and surprised that he would stand up in this House and say that it's either the farmers or the railway workers. That's not what it is, Mr. Speaker. The issue is not to make those kinds of choices.

Now I know that the Conservatives and this government would prefer that they drive a wedge between people rather than do what has always been done in Saskatchewan, and that is draw people together so that they can build what is good and what is in the best interests of them and their families. We don't accept the view of the Minister of Justice, or the member from Arm River or the member from Weyburn, or what all of them have said,

that somehow is an either/or.

And that's why the resolution which we proposed was the nature that it was, a resolution which any reasonable member in this House could accept and adopt and be comfortable with, a resolution that urged the Government of Canada and particularly the Prime Minister, who, it is thought, has some negotiating skill because of his past experiences.

We urged, through the resolution, that the Prime Minister take all of the channels available to him to bring, or help to bring about a settlement. To hang over him, Mr. Speaker, and to hang over the Parliament of Canada, a 72-hour deadline, as the members opposite want to do, can only be interpreted as an attempt to make sure that there isn't a settlement so that somehow they can take the satisfaction of having to see back to work legislation so they can go out and say, we have divided groups of people.

(2130)

I find that, Mr. Speaker, as a legislator — and one who has spent some time in this House — very objectionable. That is not why we're elected to this House. That is not what the people of our constituencies who voted for us expected us to be doing. They voted for us because they expected us to represent their overall general interests. I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that although the members opposite speak of their great concern for the rural communities of this province, and their great concern for the farmers, they are only words. They're only words, because while they speak of that, they move with a frivolous amendment which does not back up what they say. Farmers, I say, Mr. Speaker, should not be used as pawns in the Conservative Party political agenda.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — But that's what's happening; that's what's happening. Instead of trying to bring about a settlement, this Conservative government is hand in hand with people like Mr. Crosbie, going out of their way to try to make sure that there isn't a settlement and using the farmers of this province and the workers throughout Saskatchewan and Canada as pawns for straight, cheap politics.

And that is why, Mr. Speaker, we cannot support this amendment because this amendment does not live within the spirit of the original resolution. If the members thought that the original resolution was so inadequate, surely they would have changed the words in it. But they did not change the words in that resolution because they knew that it was adequate and they knew that they could have supported it. But they had to have another element because they were not convinced that they were quite ready for a settlement so that the people who work on our farms could feel confident that they wouldn't have to be concerned about what might happen two weeks from now.

Mr. Speaker, I don't want to repeat many of the things that so many members of this House have said. I simply want to say that I, as one who has friends in rural Saskatchewan

and has friends in urban Saskatchewan, would want to make it very clear that they are all important to me and this caucus in this side of the House.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — We are not in the least bit interested in seeing if we can pit one against the other. We are interested in having them work together to build a better Saskatchewan as they always have in the past. We are interested in making sure that those destructive people over there, who are trying to tear down all our traditions that the Saskatchewan people have built up, are stopped, if they can be stopped. And come three years from now, this kind of gamesmanship will be remembered. And I can only repeat what my colleague, the member from Riversdale said when he said to the member from Weyburn that he was whistling past his political graveyard while there were many members on the government side of the House who were doing the same thing once again today.

Mr. Speaker, as I have said, I will not support this amendment. My colleagues will not support this amendment. If the members opposite can't rise above their partisan politics to act in the best interests of all Saskatchewan people, so be it; so be it.

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. Order. Order, please. Order, please. Please allow the member to continue.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — But it's a choice, Mr. Speaker, that they will make, and I only say to the back-benchers over there who yet may not know how this all works. I said so several months ago when I first spoke after the election — watch the treasury benches. They do not always tell you the best advice you should have. Use your conscience; listen to your constituents back home, and if any one of those members . . . Well the member from Canora laughs. If any one of those back-benchers can tell me that in recent weeks they've been able to go back to their constituency on the weekend and be welcomed with open arms by people who warmly say what great things they are doing, let . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. Order, please. Order, please. Order, please. Order, please. I'd like to once more ask the hon. members to please refrain from interrupting the member from Regina North East who's attempting to make his points in this House tonight.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I know that the members opposite don't like to hear what the members on this side of the House have to say, but they're going to have to, and they're going to have to hear again when they get out into the country on all of these issues. But I have said what I wanted to say because I wanted to add my words to this debate. As I said, I'm going to oppose the amendment, as will the rest of my colleagues on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to enter this debate. My

remarks will be brief.

I simply want to begin, Mr. Speaker, by noting that one of the central themes in the history of this province, Mr. Speaker, has been that the CNR and the CPR have operated in their financial interests and against the interests of both farmers and workers, particularly railway workers in the province of Saskatchewan. The railway companies have continuously sought to manipulate public policy in their own interests. And they've sought to rationalize services, not in the interests of rural communities, Mr. Speaker, and not in the interests of railway workers, but in the interests of railway company balance sheets.

And all that we're witnessing today in 1987, and this month with this railway strike, Mr. Speaker, is a continuation of the trend that we've seen in Saskatchewan for the past 50 years. We see today in 1987, Mr. Speaker, railway companies who have cut maintenance crews in half, thus jeopardizing rail service, not just to farmers, but to the potash industry and to the forest industry in this province.

We see railway companies who want to abolish the caboose, Mr. Speaker, and the jobs of caboose men. And in doing so, Mr. Speaker, they jeopardize the safety of railway workers and the safety of everyone who lives in communities on railway lines that regularly carry hazardous products, Mr. Speaker.

We see today, in 1987, railway companies who consistently seek to rationalize services to rural communities, small rural centres, trying to cut service to those rural farm families by abandoning rail lines, Mr. Speaker.

We see those same railway companies today intent on introducing variable rates, essentially, Mr. Speaker, attempting to destroy the very fabric of rural Saskatchewan in doing that. And this month those same railway companies, Mr. Speaker, are intent on trying to push forward their measures to lay off thousands of railway workers in this province; in the case of CN, 25 per cent of the work-force over the next four years, or 14,000 workers.

It's the same pattern again and again in this province, Mr. Speaker. The railway companies have consistently sought to attack rural communities by bringing forward variable rates, by abandoning rail lines, and by attacking workers in this province who work for those rail lines, Mr. Speaker, by laying them off and by putting their jobs in jeopardy. Now we say, Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House that it just happens that this month, in this particular debate, the issue is job security for railway workers. And we say, Mr. Speaker, that in the face of the kind of massive . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order, please. Order, please. The hon. member from Saskatoon University is attempting to make his points, but he can't do that if he's constantly interrupted. Earlier on in the evening the same thing was happening to the member from Arm River, and certainly he's a man who seldom, if ever, interrupts other people, and I think the same could apply to the present speaker.

So I think that we should pay him the courtesy of listening to him.

Mr. Prebble: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, in the face of the massive job cuts that CN and CP want to introduce, it seems to me that railway workers have every right to negotiate job security without having every card in the deck being laid on the side of the railway companies, Mr. Speaker. And it appears that that's what members opposite want. Members opposite, Mr. Speaker, have introduced the resolution, an amendment to the resolution, in which they say that if the strike is not settled in 72 hours there ought to be back to work legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I say to them that what they are really saying to railway employees in this province and across Canada, Mr. Speaker, is that they want every card in the deck to lay on the side of the railway companies in Canada. They want them to be in a position where they hold all the aces, and the railway employees hold none, Mr. Speaker, because that is precisely what the effect of the amendment that the members opposite have introduced will be.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in closing I want to note that the amendment fundamentally changes the intention of the original motion introduced by the Leader of the Opposition. The intent of the original motion is very clear. It urges the Prime Minister to use his good offices to achieve an immediate resolution of the dispute between the railway companies and their employees, and it clearly urges the Prime Minister to pursue a negotiated settlement. It makes no reference, Mr. Speaker, to back to work legislation because it's our view the back to work legislation is not the vehicle to use in settling this dispute. The amendment put forward by the PC government essentially calls for back to work legislation.

And I say, Mr. Speaker, that you cannot negotiate in a meaningful way under the threat of back to work legislation in 72 hours. All that the threat of back to work legislation does is play into the hands of the railway companies who are intent on pushing through plans to eliminate the jobs of railway employees in this province and right across Canada. And we say, Mr. Speaker, that to do that is thoroughly unfair.

And therefore, Mr. Speaker, we will be opposing the amendment, and we urge all members of this Assembly to support the motion in its original form.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when I came here today, this afternoon, and I heard the original motion that was being presented by my colleagues, I thought it was a motion that we could all agree on in this House. And I knew it was a motion that would give much pleasure to the constituents in Saskatoon Centre, many of whom have expressed to me their concern about the divisiveness in the House, and the fact that there's always so much contention and so little harmony and so little chance for agreement.

And it seemed to me that the motion that we put forward today calling on the federal government to move quickly for a negotiated settlement would be a motion that we could all agree on, and we could put forth a position of harmony and a position of strength and a position of pressure to the federal government on this very urgent and important matter to the people of Saskatchewan.

But the amendment that's been brought forth — the amendment that's been brought forth, which is basically a motion calling on the government to legislate workers back to work, strikes me as particularly ironic, and definitely one that I could not support.

It's ironic for workers to be told to go back to work when the very issue that they're fighting is the fact that they may not have any work to go back to in the next four years. When over 14,000 workers are threatened with losing their jobs, over 25 per cent of the work-force in the railways will not have any jobs to go to. And that kind of lack of job security is something that the farmers can very much identify with because when the farmers of Saskatchewan, many of whom have mothers and fathers living in Saskatoon Centre constituency, and also sons and daughters, and many of whom are my friends in the area where we have our land, and around the province as I've gotten to know people, I feel like I have a lot of contacts with the farming community, and I realize and respect the very great importance that the farmers have in this province.

And the farmers are fighting for job security; they're fighting to stay on the land. The small farmers are very worried about their work places, their farms. And if legislation was to come forward forcing 14,000 farmers off the land, they'd be pretty upset. And they know perfectly well what's happening to the railway workers, and that that's not acceptable, and that while the acting Minister of Agriculture huffs and puffs about the need for change and change and change, farmers and workers know perfectly well that only somebody who is very secure in a job that can't be changed would talk so flippantly about change in a time when we need security as much as we can face change.

(2145)

The farmers know what the railways have done to them. They brought in variable freight rates which have cost the farmers more money. Rail line abandonment has destroyed the rural communities. And nobody has talked more strongly and more forcibly about these issues than the New Democratic Party. We've spoken very strongly for those and supported any opportunity to keep the rural communities secure, because security is as much of a value as change, and is a very important dimension. But what we have now is more deregulation coming in, which will frighten and makes changes for the farmers even more, and will make all sorts of changes in the work place, changes which make the issue of job security even more important.

I read in the *Leader-Post* today — and it was very interesting to read — that the railways claim that they stand to lose \$20 million a day during this strike — \$20

million a day in revenues. If the railways want to lose that much money each day in a strike, they must certainly have something up their sleeves to preserve them because that's an awful lot of money — \$20 million a day would provide farmers with a lot of revenue; \$20 million a day would provide 48,000 rail workers at a salary of \$30,000 a year average, would keep them going for almost two years.

Yet by supporting this strike and not negotiating the job security that's so important to the workers, the railways are prepared to throw away \$20 million a day in revenue at a time when we're so suffering, when so many people are suffering, and so many people need money, the railways can just toss this money aside by not negotiating their settlement now. And it's very clear, when you're talking about that kind of money, that the railways will have to negotiate soon, and there's no need to put in an amendment forcing workers back to work within 72 hours. A negotiated settlement would be a much safer way to go.

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. Order, please. Order, please!

Please allow the member from Saskatoon Centre to continue her remarks. You know . . . she's been interrupted quite a bit, and I'm sure you'll appreciate it's difficult to speak under those circumstances.

Ms. Smart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My point is that it's unreasonable not to settle with the workers, and I'm sure that the railways will have to move quickly to do so in a negotiated settlement. The workers will not have to be legislated back to work. I'm sure a reasonable settlement recognizing the very great importance of job security, how vital that is to people, will be recognized and will be settled.

And I notice also how ironic it is that the PC government sneers at job security for workers and at the same time talks over and over again about the need for job creation. It makes no sense to support the idea of workers being put out of work at the same time as wanting to have job creation. We have good jobs in the railways. We have good jobs that people are doing, and at this point in time, when so many people are already unemployed, it seems even more important to save those jobs, and if there must be job change, to work it out sensibly and systematically with the workers and not force them into a situation where within four years 14,000 people will lose their work.

I'm concerned that the next step that the railways will make will be deregulation. Competition from other modes of transportation will come in and raise the cost for farmers even more. And I'm sure that the PC party obviously are not supporting the need to regulate transportation costs, the need to regulate the costs of the freight rates, the need to regulate the way in which rail lines are abandoned, and the way in which communities are destroyed.

They don't believe in regulation; you don't believe in job security; you don't believe in support for small farmers

and workers. You are on the side of the multinationals, on the side of the CN railways, and you sneer at that sort of challenge; but it's very true and the farmers know it; they know you haven't stood up for them. The workers know you're not going to stand up for them, and you certainly are not going to form the government at the next election.

I'm certainly opposed to the amendment that you have brought forward.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Rolfes: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to participate in this debate for a few minutes this evening.

When the Leader of the Opposition put forward this motion this afternoon, we had hoped on this side that for once, Mr. Speaker, we could put our partisan politics aside and present a motion to the Canadian government in the interest, Mr. Speaker, in the interest not only of the farmers of Saskatchewan but of the workers of Saskatchewan and, Mr. Speaker, how it relates.

The railway strike that is taking place will not just affect the farmers, it will not just affect the workers, it will affect all of us in Saskatchewan. It will affect all of us in Saskatchewan. And for once, Mr. Speaker . . . For once, Mr. Speaker, I had hoped that the Deputy Premier would have put his partisan politics aside and would have accepted the motion that we put forward so that we could have protected the interests of not only the farmers but everyone in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, many of us have come from the farms, and many of us, our parents are still farming, our brothers and sisters are still farming, and many of us have still a personal interest in farming. It's not just the people on the other side. You're talking about job security. We're talking about job security for the daughters and sons of our farmers — of our farmers. We all have brothers and sisters who are workers, and why, for heaven's sakes, do we on this side, as you people say, run down the farmers, and you on that side run down the workers? It doesn't make sense. It really doesn't make sense.

An Hon. Member: — It does.

Mr. Rolfes: — Well maybe you didn't understand the speech that you were reading and someone else wrote the speech for you, but I listened to what you were saying. I was listening to what you were saying.

An Hon. Member: — You weren't here.

Mr. Rolfes: — Yes, I was in this House when you were speaking. And you had your opportunity to speak.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to say to the people of this House that we were very sincere in putting forward a motion that we felt was non-partisan. And if you look at that motion that was put forward, each and every one of you on that side would have to say, yes, I can support that motion — I can support the motion.

I don't understand why we had to do this again this afternoon. I listened to the member from Arm River and

he asked the member from Kindersley if it wasn't true, the comments that he was making. And, Mr. Speaker, I just want to say to the member from Arm River, if he has to rely on the truthfulness of the things from the member from Kindersley, then you haven't got much ground to stand on, Mr. Member. Because we know what the member from Kindersley thinks about the truth in this House when he speaks about government airplanes and how they are used.

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the members opposite that when you are speaking on this particular motion, they should, first and foremost, have the interest at heart of all the people that are going to be affected. And as the Leader of the Opposition indicated, we wanted a negotiated settlement. First and foremost we asked the Prime Minister, who is known as a labour negotiator, to use his office to try and settle this dispute. So what do the members opposite do? They put in an amendment to try and embarrass the opposition.

And, Mr. Speaker, it's simply isn't going to work, gentlemen. It isn't going to work because, Mr. Speaker, we know for example that this dispute that is taking place today is a dispute on job security.

Let us look back. In 1960 we had a 190,000 people working for the railways. Today we have 65,000. We have 65,000, and they are recommending that another 14,000 workers' jobs be done away with. I ask the members opposite – I ask the members opposite, place yourself in the position of those workers. How would you feel if in less than – in little over 20-some years two-thirds, well over two-thirds of your jobs had been done away with. Two-thirds of your jobs had been done away with.

And I say to the members opposite, just like we put in legislation to protect the farmers in this province so that their numbers aren't decreased, so at the same time we should have the interest at heart of the workers in this province. So we should have at heart the workers of this province.

And I say to the members opposite that, please, we could have presented a motion to the federal government, we could have presented a motion to the federal government which would have received unanimous support – unanimous support from your side and from our side – if you would have withdrawn the amendment that you put forward.

This amendment, Mr. Speaker, really negates any possibility at all of negotiating a settlement with the workers and the railways through the federal government. And why it was put forward, as I indicated before, was simply to try and make sure that they could put the NDP or the opposition in a position where we could not support the amended motion that was put forward.

I want to say to the member from Weyburn, in his little speech that he made this evening, that we are opposed to change. He says, you are opposed to change.

Yes, yes, Mr. Minister, I am opposed to change, some of

the changes that you are making. I am opposed, I am opposed when you arbitrarily dismiss people that have 30 years of experience in this province. If you arbitrarily dismiss them, I'm opposed to that change.

I'm opposed, Mr. Minister, to the change when you change this province from a have province to a have-not province. I'm opposed to that kind of a change. I say to the minister, I say to the minister, yes, I'm opposed to change. When you change this province from a surplus to a \$3.4 billion deficit in four years, I'm opposed to that kind of change. I say to the member, to the Minister of Education, yes, I am opposed to change in education when you make those changes arbitrarily and you don't consult. You don't consult.

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order, please. Order, please. Order, please. Order, order, please. Order.

I think that we have here a perfect display of things getting a little bit out of control. He's a little bit off the topic, and I know he realizes that. And over here we have people hollering to my right, so let's just allow the hon. member from Saskatoon South to carry on.

I realize that we're close to 10. It's been a long day, but let's finish the day.

Order, please. Why is the member on his feet?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — I'm asking, Mr. Speaker, for leave to deal with the question of this particular motion. This particular motion was raised, Mr. Speaker, as rule 13, a matter of . . .

An Hon. Member: — Rule 39.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Rule 39, a matter of urgent and compelling nature. I'm wondering if we could have leave to stop the clock to deal with this matter until its conclusion.

Mr. Anguish: — Mr. Speaker, I don't think that we can really do it at this point in time. There are other members on our side of the House that still wish to participate in this debate, and the member from Saskatoon South was on his feet, Mr. Speaker, and we do have other members who want . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Okay. Thank you. Okay. Obviously leave is not granted. I recognize the member for Regina South. Oh, sorry. Okay, okay. Okay, okay. Just a minute.

Order. Let's get this straight now. The House Leader, on a point of order, asked for leave to carry on with the vote. It wasn't actually a point of order, but he's basically asking for leave, so is leave granted?

Leave not granted.

(2200)

Mr. Lyons: — Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, the Deputy Premier has requested leave. I'm certain that all members on this side of the House will give leave to the Deputy Premier on the condition that the Deputy Premier

withdraws the amendment so that we can deal with, Mr. Speaker, the motion that was put forward under rule 39.

The Assembly adjourned at 10:01 p.m.