

The Assembly met at 9 a.m.

Prayers

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. Neudorf: — Mr. Speaker, late last night at the conclusion of proceedings — and this is my first opportunity to raise this point — Mr. Speaker, the member from Humboldt had been repeatedly cautioned by the Chair, and then he did make up a statement calling the member from Estevan a liar. You asked him to apologize, sir, and he did by making the statement: I apologize for calling the member of Estevan a liar.

Now, sir, I know that you do not want precedents like that being said in this House and never before has any apology, except an unequivocal apology, been accepted by this House. And, sir, I would ask you now to see to it to rectify the situation.

The Speaker: — Order, order. I think the member's point of order is well taken, and I do apologize for the members here for the lateness of the hour last night and not being as careful as I should have been with the member from Humboldt. I do remember thinking about it last night, that the practice in the past has been that the words are unconditionally withdrawn without any comments. And I think that we would do well in that regard and I ask the member from Humboldt that for the sake of the order of the House that he unconditionally withdraw those remarks that he made last night in the House.

Mr. Upshall: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, I would like at this time to apologize for the unparliamentary language I used last night in the House.

The Speaker: — All right. I appreciate that. And I hope that today we can conduct ourselves in the way that we should in this House.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 87

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wiens that **Bill No. 87 — An Act respecting amendments to Certain Farm Income Insurance Legislation** be now read a second time and the proposed amendment thereto moved by Mr. Devine and the proposed subamendment moved by Mr. Muirhead.

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Speaker, as I was speaking the other evening, we were speaking to a subamendment to the amendment to the GRIP (gross revenue insurance program) motion that is speaking about the fact that the government didn't follow a process and also invoke closure on the motion to bring forward and introduce the GRIP motion to this Assembly.

And, Mr. Speaker, I understand and I'm quite well aware of the fact that we also have notice of motion given that is going to invoke the ultimate form of closure and time allocation on this debate as well.

As I enter into this debate, Mr. Speaker, this morning, I'm mindful of the fact that the whole process has evolved around the fact that the government would dare to change and unilaterally change contracts that would affect people's lives and affect people's rights.

And as I'd look at process, certainly the process we are faced with today is a forum or an avenue being used by a government with such a large and overriding majority to stymie a small . . . and I think at one point in time possibly the government even felt that being as its shortly following an election where they received a large percentage of the vote that the small opposition they were facing may very well roll over and not really pay attention to a number of . . . the process in this Assembly and the Bills that they were bringing forward.

And I understand and see and we all are aware of the number of changes and the number of Bills that are giving . . . putting more authority in the hands of Executive Council, placing more authority in the hands of our departments, Mr. Speaker, authority which I believe interferes with the very rights and privileges, not only of the members of this Assembly but of individuals right across this province.

And as I also indicated, Mr. Speaker, as we're discussing the Bill and as we discussed the process here, I note a number of headlines prior to getting back into the official debate on the GRIP Bill. Headlines that read: government getting prepared for another GRIP battle; opposition ready for the GRIP battle.

Mr. Speaker, I believe everyone in this Assembly has laid out the guidelines by which they would be operating, laid out the fact that we really feel the opposition has laid out very strongly and very firmly their opposition to the changes and to the GRIP Bill that is actually proceeded to this Assembly. And we've laid it out, I think, very clearly.

We've laid it out because the government has indicated that they are not willing and will not change their position or move from their position. As one of the headlines reads, Mr. Speaker, it says: NDP won't change GRIP — even though they acknowledge there are . . . the process may have been circumvented, even though they would acknowledge that many producers, in fact all producers across this province whether or not they . . . Some producers feel comfortable with the '92 program, and many producers would prefer the '91 program. The options have been placed out there, Mr. Speaker.

We find that the NDP (New Democratic Party) have indicated, no, they're not willing to change the process or to change GRIP or to backtrack on their GRIP amendments and GRIP proposals and sit down and talk with the farming community. Because what happens to the GRIP Bill, Mr. Speaker, affects everybody across this province.

It affects not only the farm community and the people, men and women directly involved in the production of agricultural products to grain farming or to livestock production, Mr. Speaker, but it affects the men and women in our small communities. It affects the teachers of our small communities.

Mr. Speaker, our small communities, our schools are built around the boys and girls that attend schools — children that live on and in most cases on the farm. Most of the students in our schools come from a farm background, Mr. Speaker. And if those farm families are not there, then our schools don't have the number of pupils and eventually the schools start to close down, Mr. Speaker.

And the same thing in our health system, Mr. Speaker. We find that . . .

The Speaker: — Order. I want to remind the member that he is on the subamendment. The subamendment is very narrow in its scope. And he must . . . his words must relate only to the subamendment.

And the subamendment simply says that the words "House leaders" be substituted with the words "the Minister of Agriculture and the opposition member responsible for Agriculture" and that "because closure was used to unilaterally force introduction of this Bill in the Assembly."

So your debate on the subamendment has to be very narrow.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank you for the observation and certainly for just reminding me of the process. Obviously even though the night was short, a number of members have woken up very sharp. And I appreciate the fact that you have brought that to our attention.

Mr. Speaker, when I talk about the process, talk about the fact that the government has invoked closure, and one of the main arguments that we bring forward in the subamendment is the fact that closure was used to bring forward the GRIP motion limiting the debate on the original motion that would reintroduce GRIP, when in fact, Mr. Speaker, we're all aware of the hoist that was placed on the Bill, and asking and allowing or hopefully allowing the government and the Opposition House Leader to come to some form of an agreement.

And as we've indicated in our subamendment, Mr. Speaker, recognizing the fact that possibly even the Agriculture minister and the opposition member responsible for Agriculture would have taken the time to sit down and even adhere to some of the changes that we talked about, and sit down and come to a workable agreement.

And when we look at process, I'm reminded of the process that is taking place at the present time within our country, Mr. Speaker, regarding the constitutional debate. And I think when we talk about process, a form of process of conciliation, the process of sitting down and negotiating . . . And we're all aware of the fact that

negotiations take time; negotiations don't happen overnight. Negotiations sometimes take long hours.

And many people across this province will be aware of that — not just in the province of Saskatchewan but across Canada. When it comes to negotiations, people in unions sitting down with employers to negotiate contracts, the process of negotiation takes time. As we've seen in this Assembly over the years, it has taken time for members of all parties to sit down and finally come to a consensus on how the process should evolve, Mr. Speaker.

We find it very abhorrent that the government would indeed, instead of following the process of the legislature and the legislative agenda and how the House should operate and it would be appropriate for the House to operate, we find the government indicating that, no, they're not willing to follow the process any more but they are going to use their heavy hand and use their majority to push through and to change the process if that's necessary.

As a number of my colleagues have indicated, that there are many forms and many processes that we face. Certainly we find in the area of our everyday lives and in the sport field there are rules and regulations that we must follow, we must adhere to when we are . . . when you're playing the game. Regardless of what the game may be, there are rules to follow, Mr. Speaker; there's a process to be adhered to.

And if the umpire or the referee or whoever was in charge would change those rules or if any team would change . . . dare to try to change the rules, Mr. Speaker, the umpire or the referee would step in and say, no, these are the rules and this is what we will be calling you on; this is what the books state and we're going to follow those rules; we won't change them simply because they don't suit your needs on this occasion.

And I find it to be the same thing in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, that the Assembly has rules, has a process to follow, and it would be appropriate for the Assembly to have . . . so we have the committee in place to set out the process, set out the rules, and that then the leadership of this Assembly should be following in that process.

Mr. Speaker, when we talk about closure and talk about how you use closure, we look back over the period . . . look back over how this legislature has operated for a number of years, Mr. Speaker. The process and the form of using closure has only been invoked once an Assembly has been speaking for hours — hours on end — regarding a particular motion or regarding a particular debate or whether it affects a certain area of government. Mr. Speaker, generally speaking, the process has always been to allow the opposition ample and substantive time to debate the motion in the Assembly while at the same time moving forward with government business.

(0915)

And I guess the part of the process that I'm disturbed at and discouraged that hasn't really been allowed or followed forward or followed through, it is the fact that

any substantive government business has not been brought forward to this Assembly. And on many occasions the opposition has been left with nothing but debate on very non-controversial-type Bills because there wasn't anything else on the order paper that was really made available.

And, Mr. Speaker, that is the process I'm talking about. The fact that we should be following them, allowing the Minister of Agriculture and the minister responsible on the opposition side of the House to sit down and negotiate and work out a form of coming to an agreement on the process of debate that will take place in this Assembly.

And to invoke closure, Mr. Speaker, is taking away the ability of the members to do that because there is no need for these members to sit down and negotiate. And there was no need from the start because the government opposite and the members also knew that the House Leader would eventually bring forward the closure motion; would bring forward the time allocation motion that would take away the ability or limit the ability of the opposition to speak and limit the time so that indeed at the end of the day this Bill, the GRIP changes would go forward, would be brought forward, would be passed.

However, Mr. Speaker, what I also suggest, that in light of the changes that have been made, it may be very difficult for certain individuals to even give final approval to the changes and to the GRIP if the GRIP does reach that stage, Mr. Speaker. And certainly the time allocation motion that's been brought forward is going to allow for that change, and in fact force that change, not only on the opposition but on the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And I believe men and women across this province are very concerned that the form of debate and their limitations, by limiting the opposition, are being hindered.

So I believe, Mr. Speaker, that we should have the opportunity to stand in our place and indeed debate this motion to its fullest. And in the time we have, I believe, Mr. Speaker, we will indeed bring forward the proposals we have indicated over the period of time showing that it isn't necessary, it wasn't necessary, and shouldn't have been necessary to invoke closure on this motion.

Mr. Speaker, the other day, as I was speaking in the Assembly, I talked about the last time closure had been used. And I talked about the fact that many members, present members of the government when in opposition, spoke very loudly on the closure motion. And they indicated that it was, in their opinion, a way and a form of the government abusing their rights and their privileges, taking away their right to debate in this Assembly and that it was shameful that a government, a majority government, would indeed use this form of debate by limiting the debate on the motion.

As the member from Regina Hillsdale indicated, talked about, this debate is about a government with its own agenda, an agenda that is not in the best interests of the people of Saskatchewan. And I would suggest that certainly the agenda that is being placed before this Assembly is not in the best interests of Saskatchewan.

But I can appreciate where the government is coming from in trying to limit debate, because by allowing debate and allowing appropriate debate, not only on the GRIP Bill but on the critical wildlife habitat, on the changes to health care funding, Mr. Speaker, they have indeed forced the legislature to sit even longer than . . . I shouldn't say longer, because I believe we're in our 63rd day in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

But it would appear to me, Mr. Speaker, that closure wouldn't have been needed if the government would have indeed called the House, as they had indicated prior to the election of October 1991, if they would have called the House at a more normal time.

And I know many members on that side of the House would agree with the fact that there's no reason why this House can't sit around the end of January, the 1st of February, begin their sitting. And in the normal process of time, the House would adjourn at a fair and reasonable time to give members the ability to spend time in their constituencies when there are so many activities taking place.

And I believe that's the reason for the closure and the time allocation that has taken place right now, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that the opposition has . . . opposition of 10 members have actually and effectively spoken very strongly regarding issues that they're concerned with, specifically on the GRIP legislation. And then of course, Mr. Speaker, we must look at the other debates that would take place and will take place. And one has to recognize the fact that there are very serious estimates that must come before this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, we all realize that at the end of the day the government will have a stay. But we must have the ability to voice our opinions and our concerns regarding the process and the ability of the opposition to speak.

As the member from Regina Hillsdale said, the debate is about muzzling the opposition. And I guess many people sometimes wonder and would say, well if you're invoking closure are you really muzzling the opposition? Because I believe closure allows each member then 20 minutes to speak.

Time allocation, as I understand from the motion presented to this Assembly last night or placed on the Table, it's going to give another two days. But we must say, Mr. Speaker, does that effectively give us the appropriate time to ask the government to reconsider the process they have followed regarding the GRIP legislation?

Mr. Speaker, I realize that the motion before us . . . I think I have brought forward a number of arguments why the Minister of Agriculture and why he should have taken some time to consult with the associate . . . or the opposition critic for Agriculture. And I've also taken a fair bit of time, Mr. Speaker, to argue against the idea that the government would use closure on this motion. I think a number of my colleagues would also like to speak to the amendment and the subamendment.

And therefore at this time, Mr. Speaker, I will take my

place and I would invite any of the members on the government side of the House to enter into the debate as well, and offer their opinions and see if their opinions are as strong as they were in the debate on closure that took place back in 1989.

So therefore at this time, Mr. Speaker, I will give room for other members to speak in this Assembly.

The Speaker: — Order. Before I recognize the member from Souris-Cannington, I again want to draw the members' attention that we are on the subamendment. The subamendment has deleted the process in which it has been brought forward. And it only says that the Minister of Agriculture and the critic for Agriculture could not reach agreement and because closure was used to unilaterally force introduction.

When you're speaking to the subamendment, you must keep your words to those two things. You cannot speak to the amendment. This is not . . . you only speak to the subamendment, not to the amendment at this time. Otherwise, members — if I would allow that — members would be precluded from speaking to the amendment later on. So you must address your words only to the subamendment.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Speaker, can I ask for a clarification?

The Speaker: — Yes, you certainly may.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Speaker, the subamendment is changing the amendment from House leaders to the Minister of Agriculture, along that line. Can I speak as to why it should not be the House leaders as opposed to the Minister of Agriculture?

The Speaker: — Certainly, the member may. I would assume that that would be one of the reasons you would be giving. You certainly may.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to get that clear in my own mind because that is indeed where I wish to start at, is why we are proposing to change it from the House leaders negotiating to the Minister of Agriculture and our critic for Agriculture.

The House leaders are in continuous negotiations over various issues, and at times, things get heated and personalities become an issue whenever these debates take place. Also, the House Leader on the government side represents an urban seat and I'm not just too familiar how familiar he is with the entire issue of the GRIP program and how it affects rural Saskatchewan. There's always a lot of subtle implications when we're dealing with a particular program, especially one as complex as GRIP and the farm scenario.

Our own House Leader, while he resides on a farm, is a hog producer. And that has a different connotation than one who is a grain farmer and whose entire livelihood is tied up in the production of cereal crops and oilseeds. But if we were to go, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Agriculture and our critic for Agriculture, then we have people who are out there on the farm, dealing with these

issues on their own personal basis. They have their own personal understanding of what the implications are. There are many legal implications, but there is also a lot of subtle feelings involved in the discussion of GRIP.

Our member, the member from Morse, who is our Agriculture critic, was involved in the whole process of developing GRIP initially. So he's quite familiar, Mr. Speaker, with the intent of the Bill and what was hoped to be achieved by the production of GRIP, by implementing that safety net in place for the province, for the farmers of this province.

The member from Morse not only helped develop GRIP, but once the Bill had been introduced to this legislature back in 1991, toured the province and talked to the farmers to find out what they wanted, what changes they would like to have seen, and why they needed this program to be put in place, and what they hoped to achieve with it at the end of the day.

Even in my own constituency, Mr. Speaker, there were two meetings to deal with this issue where the farmers came forward and presented their ideas, talked to the ministers about what was involved in this program, what they hoped to achieve, and what the farmers hoped to get out of it.

So our critic for Agriculture is very aware of what the farmers wanted out of this program and what they wanted to achieve with it. He was also the member who looked after ACS (Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan) as his portfolio while a cabinet minister. So he's also aware of the financial needs of the farmers when it comes to being able to make their payments and the process that you have to go through, the time frame that these payments become necessary.

He is familiar, as I'm sure the member from Rosetown is familiar, that our crop year doesn't start on January 1; it starts on August 1. And your cash flow comes in after that. So the GRIP program was developed to take that into account. That after the crop year started, the production would have been measured in some manner or another, estimated. People would know, the farmers on the land would know what their production was, what the projected price was, and they could receive a payment that fall and then it would carry on.

The Minister of Agriculture is also aware of that, whereas the House leaders may not be, because our House Leader is a hog producer and the member from Elphinstone represents a riding in the city of Regina.

An Hon. Member: — But does he farm?

Mr. D'Autremont: — I have no idea if the Government House Leader does indeed farm. I don't know if he does or not any more. I know that he used to, but I'm not sure if he still does.

But if the two, the member from Rosetown and the member from Morse, Mr. Speaker, had the opportunity to sit down, with a good feeling of how the GRIP program should work and what should be in place with it, then there is the possibilities there that some compromises

could be developed. But unless that opportunity is provided, unless that opportunity is taken advantage of, well then that won't happen.

And there are some differences between the proposed GRIP and the one that was in place last year, and those differences need to be ironed out and discussed. But unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, we haven't been allowed . . . that process hasn't been allowed to take place — the discussion between those two members. Indeed what has happened as this Bill has come through the House is that closure has been used to force it into play.

(0930)

The bells rang, the Bill was suspended, a motion was made to reintroduce the Bill into this House and that motion included a motion of closure that debate on that Bill would be limited to force the Bill onto the floor of the Assembly. And, Mr. Speaker, it worked, because the Bill is indeed here.

Before that happened, closure was also used to force an end to the bell-ringing, not the bell-ringing itself but the ability to use bell-ringing as a tool for the opposition, by using closure to eliminate the bells, by using closure to force the Bill onto the floor of the House. And then again last night, Mr. Speaker, time allocation notices were given which means that closure will be introduced on the GRIP debate itself.

All of this has made a very tight time frame for the opposition and a tight time frame for farmers on the land to be able to express themselves, to gain knowledge of the program. When you look back at the previous GRIP legislation, it took farmers six months to figure out for themselves after all the meetings had been held around the province just what GRIP meant to them and how it was to operate. They had a year to learn that and they were just starting to become comfortable in their own minds as to how the GRIP program was to operate.

With these changes coming forward, farmers are again placed in a position of limbo where they do not understand what the process is all about, what they expect, how they should expect the program to work at the end of the day. In my own communities this spring while groups were touring the province to discuss the GRIP program — the Pool had meetings down in our area — the next day you'd go and talk to people and they'd have an impression that there is a fixed amount of money on the table to be paid out at the end of the year.

Mr. Speaker, that does not seem to be the case. And that's where you get involved into the principles of what is happening here — the principle being that time has not been allowed for people to become familiar with the program.

Because closure was used, this unilaterally forced the Bill onto the floor of the House and it's also going to unilaterally in the end close this Bill off to debate for the opposition and for the government members also. Because once closure is brought to the floor, it eliminates our ability to . . . we would have 200 minutes, I believe it is, to talk about the Bill, and also closure is also going to

be used, from what I gather and what was introduced last night, on Committee of the Whole.

And Committee of the Whole, Mr. Speaker, is where everybody has the opportunity to get clarifications on how the Bill is actually going to work, the nuts and bolts of it, to get the explanations from the Minister of Agriculture. And not only do we need to know those answers, but the government members need to have an opportunity to ask those questions also. Their constituents are just as concerned as ours are.

If you look around the province . . . I was listening to the radio this morning, they were giving a crop report, and the west-central part of Saskatchewan supposedly has very bad crops. I know that the north part of the province has very poor crops. So those constituents need to be able to have their members ask the questions to find out how it's going to operate in their area. And because of time allocation, because of closure, those members and us are going to be limited as to how much we can actually ask when it comes to questions.

I've noticed through a number of the other Bills that have gone through the House, that in many times there are a lot of small details that are not printed in the Bill but actually become part of regulation later, that need to be clarified to the people out in the public and to the people sitting on the floor of this Assembly, the members.

And without having a decent amount of time to ask our questions in Committee of the Whole or to bring up those type of questions in second reading, it becomes very difficult to determine exactly what is in the Bill and how it will operate. And not only do we need to have that ability, but the people out in the general public, the farmers who are going to be dealing with this, who have been trying to deal with this ever since this spring, need to have more opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, that's why we feel that this Bill needs to be given more time. It needs to have an extended period of time to go through this House to allow everyone to gain some knowledge of it. There are particular items that will come forward that should be discussed out in the general public, but with time allocation in place that indeed will not take place. I believe the time allocation that has been proposed will limit the debate to approximately four days, and this will make it very difficult for the people in the general public to gain a knowledge of what is going to happen and what is going to be said.

One of the items that I know has come up in my own area as to what the general public would like to see, is the question of a basket situation versus individual crops. Now I have some people in my area who like the idea of going to a basket situation, and others who just find it totally abhorrent. And yet the two of them need to be able to get together and discuss it, the same as we need to be able to discuss it in this legislature.

There are some advantages and disadvantages to both methods. And our Agriculture representative . . . our agricultural critic and the Agriculture minister are aware of these. They know what some of these differences are. They realize that if you're looking at a premium that is

fairly high, by going to an individual case, some farmers cannot afford that. But they should be able to sit down together and debate — negotiate perhaps would be a better word — the advantages and disadvantages of both.

And perhaps what needs to be allowed is that both can be presented through the Bill, that the farmers be given an alternative, that you can take either a basket situation with a lower premium, if that's what you would like, or perhaps take an individual crop coverage and pay a higher premium for that privilege.

What happens with the individual crop coverage is you may have an excellent crop in crop A, a poor crop in crop B, but they don't offset each other, whereas that's what happens in a basket situation. A basket situation, because there is less risk involved in it, would mean that you could reduce the premiums. And I believe, Mr. Speaker, that our critic for Agriculture and the Minister of Agriculture understand those things and they could sit down and talk about them and negotiate it.

One of the options that has been talked about in my area is a buy-back option for dry-land producers. This would allow them to over-produce their GRIP guarantee and still not be penalized. A similar sort of method is used in Alberta and in Manitoba. Our Agriculture critic has looked at this. He looked at it last year prior to the implementation but didn't have time at that time to put it into the Bill. And it would have been coming up again for considerations.

And I believe there is something very worthwhile in that because what happens under the current circumstances is that if you produce a greater amount than what your guarantee is, this is deducted from . . .

The Speaker: — Order. The member must be very careful here. He's getting into discussion of the detail of the Bill. And in your subamendment, you can't do that. You must stick by what the subamendment . . . It's very narrow, I recognize. But the member must stay on the subamendment.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will indeed try to stay to the amendment . . . subamendment. Sorry about that.

Part of the things involved here that we're discussing involves the principles of the issue. We're changing this amendment with a subamendment to read: this Bill should not be read a second time because the ministers of Agriculture and the opposition member responsible for Agriculture have not reached agreement on the principles involved, and unilaterally forced introduction of this Bill in the Assembly. So we also are, Mr. Speaker, talking about the principles involved in this Bill.

And I believe that is part of what I'm trying to bring out, is some of the principles involved here, and part of the principles that are involved is the protection of agriculture, of farmers in this province. Rather than having peaks and valleys in the income for farmers, is to try and stabilize that income and to allow farmers the ability to plan a little better how their farm economy is going to work and how their farm financing is going to

operate.

One of the problems that farmers have, Mr. Speaker, in financing their operations, is that we have income coming in in the fall and very little income coming back in in the spring. So the principles of a safety net program is to — partially — is to try and stabilize that, to allow that income to come in throughout the year, not all in one lump sum at one particular time, but rather spread it out. And the GRIP legislation, when payments are due, does exactly that. It allows payments to come in the fall, the spring, and again in the fall. And that's one of the principles involved in a GRIP, in a NISA (net income stabilization account), in a safety-net, farm program.

One of the other principles involved in this is why the whole legislation has been brought into play. Is that because of low commodity prices? Farm prices were way down. Agriculture was in trouble. And this GRIP legislation allows farmers to be protected a little better than what was in place before.

And because our critic for Agriculture, the member from Morse, was involved in the establishment of this program, he's very familiar with the entire operations of it. The Minister of Agriculture, I believe, is probably becoming familiar with the GRIP legislation, because he's been dealing with it now for these past number of months.

Between the two of them, I believe they understand that what the principles actually involved are and why this kind of a Bill is being put into place. This Bill is being put into place to provide protection for agriculture, as I have stated earlier, and that protection is to deal with low commodity prices, to deal with crop failures, to stabilize farmers' income.

Part of what needs to be done, Mr. Speaker, when dealing with the Minister of Agriculture and the critic for Agriculture, is that consultation needs to take place with them and with farmers around this province. And that's one of the things, Mr. Speaker, that has been lacking in this entire process, is the consultation that should have taken place to allow the Minister of Agriculture and the critic for Agriculture to gain a more intimate knowledge of what the farmers are thinking out there after having had the opportunity to go through one crop year with the previous GRIP.

The leaders of the . . . the House Leader for the government and our House Leader should also have been involved in that kind of a process. But because that did not take place, I believe it's incumbent that the agricultural representatives of this Assembly, the Minister of Agriculture and our critic for Agriculture, do take advantage of the opportunities to go out there and consult.

There were a number of farm rallies around this spring where that consultation could have taken place. Our member from . . . our critic for Agriculture was down at Shaunavon where a number of farmers wished to talk about the new GRIP legislation, wished to have their say. The minister for Saskatchewan Crop Insurance was there and also took the opportunity to become aware what the farmers had to say, but unfortunately the Minister of

Agriculture was not there. And it would have been important, I believe, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Agriculture, if he had been there, to learn what the farmers concerns were.

There is talk in the paper of another rally being held up at Melfort and I think there would be an opportunity for both of these gentlemen — the member from Morse and the member from Rosetown — to find out what the farmers think of the current program. Whether they would like '91 or '92 or what changes they would like to see in either or both of those programs.

Because while these gentlemen do have a very intimate knowledge of the program, as you look through a program there's always small details which have been missed, which may affect one particular area more than another, that should be brought forward and the program perhaps adjusted to deal with that kind of a situation.

When these farmers do have ideas, Mr. Speaker, they are generally very good and very practical ideas. And I think it's incumbent on the government and on the opposition to take advantage of these opportunities to listen to what the farmers — the producers — have to say, to find out how they think the programs are affecting them, and if need be, to make the adjustments to accommodate both the needs of the Government of Saskatchewan, the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, and the producers of Saskatchewan. Because both are a player in this whole affair.

(0945)

And if our members were to go out and to consult, to deal with the issues that the farmers are bringing forward, I think we could have a much better piece of legislation than what we seem to have today.

The Minister of Agriculture and our member from Morse, our Agriculture critic, should be getting together, Mr. Speaker, to try and discuss some of the ideas because they come at it from slightly different points of view. And this would allow an opportunity for some negotiations and for perhaps some adjustments.

Since we're going to be limited in the amount of time that we have to deal with this today, to deal with this in the next coming weeks, then perhaps some negotiations outside of this House would be worthwhile for all concerned. I know sometimes it gets to be very difficult to accommodate that because of times, but perhaps, Mr. Speaker, that is one of the alternatives that could be looked at by the members to solve this impasse that we have and to get some adjustments made into the program to make it more acceptable for everyone.

One of the things that would have made this entire process, Mr. Speaker, run a lot more smoothly is if the Minister of Agriculture and our critic for Agriculture had had the opportunities to review the draft Bill before it was introduced to the House. This has been done, not necessarily between the minister responsible and a critic, an opposition critic, but the consultation process has been allowed to take place with other Bills such as the labour Bill and the health Bill with the people in the

general public that are concerned with it.

Had the two agricultural representatives in the Assembly been allowed to take a look at the draft Bill and work through it together, Mr. Speaker, this would have facilitated its passage through the House. It would have also been beneficial I believe, Mr. Speaker, had the general public been allowed, or at least certain farm groups and organizations, to have had a look at the draft legislation. And perhaps some of the acrimony that has become involved in this would have been avoided.

As a caucus and through the Agriculture critic, we're prepared to offer advice to the Minister of Agriculture, free of charge, to aid in this process. And I'm sure that the Minister of Agriculture, because he's cost conscious and his government is cost conscious, would have been prepared to accept any free advice that they were given. But when you offer free advice, Mr. Speaker, and it's accepted, then you hope that at some point in time some portion of that advice might be listened to and taken.

We have a number of ideas over here, Mr. Speaker. The member from Morse has a number of ideas on how the GRIP legislation could be improved, how you could make it more beneficial for the farmers of Saskatchewan, to deal with the principles involved of stabilizing farm incomes and providing for those times when commodity prices are lower than normal and the farm economy is in a crisis as they are today.

Part of the principles of the entire concept of farm safety nets and this particular GRIP legislation is to protect farmers in times of hurt, not necessarily just to protect the government from being hurt by low commodity prices, but the actual producers on the land and their families. Because the families, Mr. Speaker, are indeed suffering because of the farm commodity situation.

Mr. Speaker, it would have been better throughout this whole discussion had our two representatives been able to sit down and talk about alternatives between the GRIP '91 and the GRIP '92.

And it would have been much more beneficial to all of us had both of our representative sat down with the farmers to find out what they would have wanted, to find out whether they preferred '91 or a portion, or '92 or a portion of that, and somehow combine them together to come up with a Bill that would have been acceptable to everyone. And I believe those kind of negotiations could have and should have taken place.

Part of the things they could have considered, Mr. Speaker, was the new federal offers that were made. We were prepared to discuss with the Minister of Agriculture, to offer him our advice as to how to implement, how to bring forward, how to accept those new federal offers which would have put 30 to \$40 an acre on the table for all the farmers of this province. And yet because those negotiations never took place, because of the hard feelings in the House, this money has perhaps been lost to the people of Saskatchewan. And in a time of low commodity prices, Mr. Speaker, farmers cannot afford to lose that kind of money.

Because these negotiations have not taken place, and I believe they should, Mr. Speaker, between the Minister of Agriculture and our House critic for Agriculture, thousands of farmers are having their contracts broken. This is going to cost them money. This is going to cost the province money, Mr. Speaker. But if these negotiations between the two House Agriculture representatives could take place, then perhaps we could avoid this. We could avoid the concept of taking the Bill to the Supreme Court. Because no matter how it gets there, Mr. Speaker, it is going to cost us money and it will indeed get there.

The principles involved in this case, Mr. Speaker, is that farmers, the provincial government, and the federal government have formed a compact . . . have a contract to deal with the situation of stabilizing farm incomes, to protect farmers from low commodity prices. But this does not just deal with the province, it does not just deal with the farmers, but the federal government is also involved in it. And I think they are the lost player in this, and somehow or another, they have to be brought back into the process before it costs us a lot of money. And I'm sure that our Agriculture critic is prepared to work with the Minister of Agriculture to discuss with the federal government the implications of this Act, of this amendments to the GRIP legislation.

Mr. Speaker, when contracts are broken in this province, it's not only farmers that are involved, but everyone else who has a contract with the government. So the implications here can be very wide-ranging. And as we're suggesting, with the Agriculture critic negotiating with the Minister of Agriculture, all other sectors of society are watching this very carefully to see if there are implications for them. They're also watching when they see this government unilaterally force the introduction of this Bill onto the Assembly because they wonder, how is this going to affect us? How is it going to affect the legislation that affects us?

The closure rule, Mr. Speaker, when I came into the House, I thought this was a rule that was used only on the rare occasion, that it was only used in the most dire of circumstances. And yet I have seen it used three times already in this session and it's to be used again. It seems to becoming the rule, the norm, rather than the exception. And I think that has to be frightening to everyone, not only in this Assembly, not only in this province, but across the Commonwealth, because once a precedent is set, as we're all aware, it becomes the rules for everyone.

And if closure becomes the rule in this House, it's going to be very difficult to move things along in this House. Closure has been used previously in this House. It was used in the potash debate after 120 hours of debate. It was used in The E&H (Education and Health) Tax Act after two months of debate. But we've had it used after five hours of debate. We've had it used after a number of hours of debate, but not that many — 10, 15 hours — and again we're going to have it used now after only two or three days of debate on the GRIP legislation.

And I find that unacceptable, Mr. Speaker. It's unacceptable that we should be using closure to end debate on an issue of such vital importance to the farmers and to the whole provincial economy, Mr. Speaker. The

whole of this province needs time to look at, to review, and to adjust to the proposed GRIP legislation.

This type of heavy-handed action, Mr. Speaker, I don't believe is acceptable to the majority of people in this province. They want to see this Assembly operate but they want to see it operate in a manner which is proper, in a manner in which they would conduct their own business.

Mr. Speaker, I believe it's very incumbent that our Minister of Agriculture and the opposition minister responsible for Agriculture sit down together to go through the principles that's involved in the GRIP legislation and try and find some manner to accommodate both of them, to find some manner to accommodate the wishes of the farmers, the needs of the farmers, and the needs of this Assembly. Because to unilaterally force through the introduction of this Bill, I don't believe is acceptable to anyone, particularly to the farmers of Saskatchewan.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I believe I will allow my colleagues to have an opportunity to speak. We have many more items we wish to bring forward, and at this time I would like to thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The GRIP legislation, Mr. Speaker, that's been brought forward by the member for Rosetown-Elrose has been a botched-up process right from the start.

On March 13, Mr. Speaker, the minister brought forward the legislation . . . pardon me, the changes in the program that essentially, as all farmers in Saskatchewan know now, changed the program to a program that's totally unworkable, to a program that is . . . guarantees the farmer virtually nothing other than crop insurance, which he had before, to a program that . . . the only beneficiary seems to be in this whole process is the provincial government. The only beneficiary in the program seems to be the provincial government, Mr. Speaker.

Farm organizations that designed the program, as Mr. Minister of Agriculture points out, I think they regret the day they ever sat down with you, sir. I think they regret that day more than ever. The member of the committee from Shaunavon practically . . . Gull Lake, practically broke down in the public meeting in Shaunavon down there and admitted that he did not want to be part of the signatories of this program, Mr. Speaker.

The member from the Moosomin area on the . . . SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities) representative has said he didn't want anything to do with it. My guess is Piper at Elrose doesn't want anything to do with you any more. My guess is there isn't a single representative of the wheat growers that want to have anything to do with you, and that probably is the reason why you exclude them from your meetings now, Mr. Speaker.

The GRIP '91 program, as you're aware, Mr. Minister of Agriculture, was introduced early, early in the year of 1991. There were public informational meetings held all over the province, which ministers from the government

side attended all over the province — something that the Minister of Agriculture wouldn't extend that same courtesy to farm families around the province.

He didn't even leave this building to speak to farmers about the program — didn't extend that kind of courtesy to farm families in this province, Mr. Speaker. And then he has the gall to stand in here and say farmers want this program, Mr. Speaker — the unmitigated gall to suggest that farmers want this program.

The people of Saskatchewan, the farm families of Saskatchewan deserve and expect better. One thing they know, Mr. Minister, is after this session is over, you will no longer be the Minister of Agriculture. And that's something that I think will be welcomed by all farm families in this province, Mr. Speaker.

Probably it'll be somebody like the member from Humboldt will be the new minister of Agriculture, or maybe even the member from Shaunavon, or maybe the member from Saskatoon Broadway, if she sticks around long enough to accept that appointment.

(1000)

Then we would truly know that we could expect incompetence. We would truly know that we could expect incompetence from one of those three. But we expected more, we expected more from the member from Rosetown-Elrose in the fine tradition of bringing down to Regina the type of people like the previous member, Mr. Swan. We truly know we could expect incompetence from those three, but we expected better from the Minister of Agriculture today.

Mr. Speaker, the GRIP committee was told by the Minister of Agriculture to cut this program back, was told by the Minister of Agriculture to cut this program back. And he knows it and we know it. Members of the committee have told us that.

You went into that committee, sir, and said to them, this program has to be cut back approximately \$200 million, and however it's done is fine with me. You guys find out the best way possible and deal with it, and then we'll come up with recommendations. And that, Mr. Minister, is how it was done. And you know it and I know it and every other person in this province knows it.

So they came up with a solution that was what they thought was acceptable to farmers under the worst of circumstances, Mr. Speaker. And the Minister of Agriculture laughs over there. But the farm families of Saskatchewan know that that's the case. They know that that's the case. The evidence is clear, Mr. Speaker.

On April 27 when the budget come down, the departments of Rural Development and departments of Agriculture were all cut back, and the evidence is there for all to see.

Mr. Speaker, that is why at this time we think that the Minister of Agriculture and the critic for Agriculture here should be involved in these negotiations. He at least has a handle on the program, at least has some degree of

knowledge of the program, some . . . qualify, I have to qualify that and say, some degree of knowledge on the program. He knows that he cut back the program; he knows that farmers of Saskatchewan don't like the program; he knows that even his back-benchers in some cases don't like the program; he knows that the member for Cut Knife-Lloydminster has opposition to the program; he knows that the member for Humboldt has opposition to the program; he knows that there were meetings in Humboldt that farmers were upset at. He knows that there were meetings in Shaunavon, in Regina at the Agridome, and on the front steps of the legislature here, Mr. Speaker. He knows all of those things.

And that's why he should be standing up in his place and taking this legislation off the order paper or, at the very least — at the very least — taking it to the Appeal court. Even your Premier, even the Premier of the province has suggested that, Mr. Speaker. People all over the province have suggested that, Mr. Speaker. At Shaunavon they said to the member from Shaunavon, who doesn't know a thing about agriculture it's obvious, that he should be letting farmers have their day in court, Mr. Speaker.

Where is that member? Why isn't that member pressing his Minister of Agriculture to meet with our Agriculture critic to talk over these principles? Why isn't he doing that, Mr. Speaker? Why is that member not standing in his place and saying to the people of the Shaunavon constituency or the rest of the province, the farm families of this province, that I will carry the message to the Minister of Agriculture, I will carry the message to that member from Rosetown-Elrose? Why doesn't he do that, Mr. Speaker? I don't know, Mr. Speaker. One can only speculate, I guess. Maybe he doesn't have the intellectual capacity to do it.

The Speaker: — Order, order. Order. I think the member is getting very personal in his comments on another member of the House, and it does not help in keeping order in this House. Also the member should remember he's on the subamendment. He must direct his questions to the subamendment only, not to the amendment.

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Absolutely, the Minister of Agriculture, I believe, and our critic for Agriculture should have been, very definitely should have been involved in the discussions right from the very beginning, Mr. Speaker. They should have been involved in those discussions. The Minister of Agriculture could have accepted some advice from this side, I think, of the House. He could have accepted that advice. He could have accepted advice from the member from Shaunavon as well. He could have accepted that advice.

He didn't accept it. He didn't do the honourable thing and ask for this . . . ask the member, the Minister of Justice, to take that Bill to the Appeal court. He didn't do that. The Minister of Justice won't do it. One only has to wonder how that process is going to come forward, Mr. Speaker.

I think what will happen, I think what will happen eventually, Mr. Speaker — and I say eventually because it's a long, protracted procedure — but I think eventually what will happen . . . I think eventually what will happen is a lawyer in Saskatchewan . . . And there's lots of them

around. They're in the newspapers here. They're all speculating about the program and the changes in the program and whether it was done constitutionally or not, Mr. Speaker.

The process is all mixed up and they know it. Right from the very outset, Mr. Speaker, the process has been mixed up. And I'd like to quote from a Saskatoon lawyer — a Saskatoon lawyer. This was reported, Mr. Speaker, in the *Leader-Post*, August 7, '92:

A Saskatoon lawyer believes the bill amending the Gross Revenue Insurance Plan is on very shaky constitutional ground and thinks it will be challenged in court.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture is aware of that. The Minister of Agriculture is aware of it and also is our critic on this side aware of it, Mr. Speaker. It's on very, very shaky constitutional ground, Mr. Speaker.

And you would have thought the farm rallies around this province would have demonstrated that to the minister, Mr. Speaker. You would have thought that the rally in Shaunavon . . . you would have thought that the rally in Shaunavon, the rally in the AgriDome here, the rally on the front steps of this legislature would have pointed it out.

And incidentally, Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to see the member for Cut Knife-Lloyd. She spoke out in opposition to the program, Mr. Speaker. She suggested there should be alternatives to it. I would say to her, she should be talking to the Minister of Agriculture, who in turn should be talking to our Ag critic, Mr. Speaker, about these proposals.

An Hon. Member: — Who's the Ag critic?

Mr. Boyd: — The Ag critic on this side they're asking, Mr. Speaker, and I think they're aware of that, is the hon. member for Morse, Mr. Speaker. They all know that that's the case. They all know that that's the case, Mr. Speaker.

Why wouldn't they allow the opportunity for the member from Rosetown-Elrose to discuss this program with the member for Rosetown . . . or for Morse, pardon me. Why wouldn't they, Mr. Speaker? Because they knew they had to cut it back. That was their intention right from the very beginning — cut the program back, cut it back to the bone.

Part of their rural revenge, Mr. Speaker, part of the revenge on rural Saskatchewan for supporting Conservatives in '82 and '86. Part of the revenge that they feel is necessary to try and enhance their electoral chances in the next election, which will come all too soon, which will come all too soon for a lot of members, members like the member for Quill Lakes, all too soon for him, I'm afraid. And the member from Humboldt and particularly the member from Shaunavon — yes the one waving his arm there up beside his ear — particularly when it comes . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Again the member knows he is not to refer to members in the House and what they are . . .

what their activities are or what they are doing. And the member, again I want to remind him he's on the subamendment.

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We'll try and confine our remarks to that, Mr. Speaker.

Why couldn't the member, why couldn't the member for Rosetown-Elrose speak with this side of the House about the program? Why not, Mr. Speaker? What would have been wrong with that? There were a number of suggestions that came forward from not only this side, from the member from Morse, but from ag committees, ag people all over the province, Mr. Speaker.

It was suggested earlier on, right from the outset that '91 GRIP or '92 GRIP could have been an option. The member is aware of that. The member from Rosetown-Elrose is aware of that. The Minister of Agriculture, he is aware that that option could have existed, Mr. Speaker. We suggested that option. The member from Morse suggested that option in question period a number of times earlier on in this session, Mr. Speaker. It was suggested to the member from Rosetown that that could have been an option.

The federal government, the federal government, the Minister of Agriculture suggested . . . the federal Minister of Agriculture suggested that he would take part in that discussion, he'd take part in those negotiations, he'd pay part of the administration costs, Mr. Speaker. The federal minister made that offer.

Once again, once again, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture turned down that suggestion. One can only wonder, one can only wonder why he would turn that suggestion down as well.

Well, Mr. Speaker, he was told by his Premier and his Finance minister to cut the program back, that's why. Right from the outset that was the motivation for this . . . changes in the program, Mr. Speaker. And the Minister of Agriculture knows that.

The option was presented to him by our Ag critic. It was presented and he knows it, '91 or '92. And the media knows it, and the general public knows it, that that option was presented on a number of occasions, day after day after day earlier in this session, Mr. Speaker.

What happened after that, Mr. Speaker, we all recall, we got into long debate about this Bill. The members of the opposition said right from the outset that we would fight this thing to the very end and that's what we're doing, Mr. Speaker.

The process has been botched up by the Minister of Agriculture right from the very beginning. His incompetence, I think, is becoming clearer and clearer and clearer every day. I think he should only be too willing to accept some advice from the member from Morse, our Ag critic. Only too willing he should be. Maybe we could get this process back on the rails and farmers could have some kind of security knowing that the program is in place, Mr. Speaker. And the member from Rosetown-Elrose knows that. He also knows, I

suspect, that he won't be around after this session is over and another member will be the new Minister of Agriculture. And hopefully they'll have a level of competence higher than this man has, Mr. Speaker.

What happened then, Mr. Speaker? The opposition took the move of starting the bells ringing in our opposition to this program and the program changes, Mr. Speaker. We said right from the outset that it was an illegal process, an illegal action taken by the minister. Notification of changes of the program did not take place. We advised that right from the beginning, Mr. Speaker, that that was an illegal action. Farmers recognized it was an illegal action and that's why he's been hauled up in court, Mr. Speaker.

My guess before long is he'll be hauled up either in the Appeal court in Saskatchewan or the Supreme Court in Ottawa. That's where he'll find himself eventually. He knows it. And one wonders what he'll say when he's standing there, Mr. Speaker. Maybe he could accept some advice from our member from Morse at that time, Mr. Speaker. Maybe he'd be willing to accept some advice from our member, Mr. Speaker, at that time. Maybe he would then say to the farm families of Saskatchewan, I was wrong, Mr. Speaker. I'm sorry, I was wrong.

I think if he just made that admission, Mr. Speaker, everyone in Saskatchewan would feel a lot more comfortable about this member from Rosetown-Elrose, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure that's the kind of advice that the member from Morse, our Ag critic, would be giving him, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure that's the kind of advice he'd be getting from him.

Stand up in your place, sir, and straighten this mess out with the farm families of Saskatchewan. Stand up in your place and do that. But no, so far we've seen nothing but reluctance on the part of the minister, nothing but accusations, blame throwing. He's done that on every occasion. We've witnessed that in the House here day after day after day, and the people of Saskatchewan have witnessed that day after day after day. It's the previous government; it's the weather; it's the federal government; it's the farmers themselves.

There's moral hazard all over the place with the farmers, Mr. Speaker. And yet, what happens, Mr. Speaker? They appoint one of those moral hazard-type people to their own board of Crop Insurance, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure that the member from Morse would give better advice than that to the member from Rosetown-Elrose, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure he'd give them the advice that says to him, stand up and do the right thing, sir. Stand up and do the right thing and correct this program before it's too late.

We'll be into harvest here, Mr. Speaker, in a short time. In a very short time, Mr. Speaker, we'll be into harvest. Swathing operations will be starting in the south-west, and certainly in my area before very long and in the Minister of Agriculture's area before very long, Mr. Speaker . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . And the member from Quill Lakes says, and we're praying for frost. Well I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, we certainly are not praying for frost. We're hoping that the farm families of this province

get a good crop so that they can try and hold their farm together in spite of — in spite of — the kind of program that you members opposite have come up with.

The member from Rosetown-Elrose has . . . and should have taken advice from the member from Morse about this program. He should have taken advice. He knows he should have taken advice. The member from Quill Lakes unfortunately doesn't understand agriculture, I don't think, Mr. Speaker. That's why I don't think he understands it, Mr. Speaker.

(1015)

Mr. Speaker, if he would accept advice from this side of the House, if he would accept advice from this side of the House like the member from Morse, the member from Quill Lakes would know all too well that this program is wrong. I think he knows it as a lawyer that it's wrong. I think he knows that.

I think he knows that the advice from this side of the House is correct to the Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Speaker. I think he knows that. I think he knows that the lawyers of Saskatchewan, the constitutional lawyers . . .

The Speaker: — Order. I want to remind the member again, he's on the subamendment, and the member has to stay on the subamendment and not on the amendment or the main motion. Now this is the second or third time that I've warned him and I don't really want to warn him again that he must stay on the subamendment.

Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Speaker, the member from Rosetown-Elrose, the Minister of Agriculture, knows full well that advice from the member from Morse, our Agriculture critic, was correct. The member from Shaunavon knows it was correct. The member from Moose Jaw knows it's correct. The member from Humboldt knows it's correct. The member from Quill Lakes knows the advice has been correct, Mr. Speaker. And most certainly, the member from Rosetown-Elrose knows the advice our member is giving him is correct, Mr. Speaker.

But yet they don't want to accept the advice. One can only wonder why, Mr. Speaker. Why don't they want to accept that advice? Mr. Speaker, is it stubbornness? No, I don't think it's only stubbornness. They want to cut the program back, and that's the reason why. That's the reason why the member from Rosetown-Elrose advised the committee right from the outset to do that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I find it unfortunate that we're in the midst of this type of debate. We're moving later into the summer all the time. Harvest is approaching, Mr. Speaker. We all know that. Before very long, Mr. Speaker, harvesting operations will be taking place. And then what will happen?

We will be giving advice once again to the member. Our critic for Agriculture once again will be giving more advice to the Minister of Agriculture, suggesting to him that he'd better get on with it, the process. We made the offer; the member from Morse made the offer here in the

last few days to the government side and the Minister of Agriculture that they take this to the Appeal court and eventually to the Supreme Court if necessary, Mr. Speaker. That advice was given. Those talks took place, Mr. Speaker.

And what happened, Mr. Speaker? The Minister of Agriculture through his House Leader and others, Mr. Speaker, rejected it outright.

And yet, Mr. Speaker, they know right from the very outset that this is going to have to happen. They know that eventually it's going to get to the Supreme Court. It might take a couple of years, Mr. Speaker. It might further bankrupt an already troubled economy, farm economy in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. That's what is going to happen, Mr. Speaker.

The farm families of Saskatchewan can't afford this, but yet my guess is there'll be hundred-dollar cheques coming in from all over the province, a form of advice to the Minister of Agriculture to suggest that he should take this program and this Bill and see whether it's constitutional, Mr. Speaker.

Our member from Morse right from the outset suggested that the farmers should have their day in court. That's been the basis of the argument right from the very beginning, Mr. Speaker. The farmers should have their right to court and it's being denied by this Bill, Mr. Speaker. And the member from Rosetown-Elrose in talks with the member from Morse, he realizes that that's the case, Mr. Speaker.

The debate now continues to go on. We've seen closure put on at every opportunity they can, Mr. Speaker. The Rules Committee was struck to change the rules, Mr. Speaker, to change the rules, the principles of this process, Mr. Speaker. And the process is all mixed up.

Our member from Morse is a member of that Rules Committee, Mr. Speaker, and I'm sure he gave the same advice to the Minister of Agriculture that he gave to that committee, that bell-ringing and changing the bell-ringing was wrong, Mr. Speaker. Changing the bell-ringing was the only way, the only way that they knew that they could force this legislation through, Mr. Speaker.

And that's what they're trying to do right now: closure at every opportunity; forcing it at every opportunity, Mr. Speaker; changes in the program that farmers don't want. And the Minister of Agriculture knows that and the member from Morse has suggested it to them, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it's unfortunate that the members of the opposition . . . of the government side, pardon me, won't accept advice from our members, Mr. Speaker. Not once did the Minister of Agriculture ask opposition members what we thought of this program — not once. Didn't ask. Didn't ask myself. He didn't ask the member from Morse, our critic for Agriculture, didn't ask those concerns, didn't ask about what we thought of the program.

The only motivation was cutting it back, and he knows it.

The only motivation was cutting it back. He gave that advice right from the start. He gave that essentially, he gave that order right from the start, Mr. Speaker . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . And they're yelling: you're off the amendment. Well we know very well, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Agriculture should have — should have — been responsible and taken the responsible action and talked to our member from Morse, the critic for Agriculture.

But he didn't do it. Not once did the Minister of Agriculture offer information to opposition members responsible for Agriculture on what the review committee was doing. Did you? Did you talk to members from opposition about the program, Mr. Minister? No, you didn't, sir. You know right from the start that you've made a mistake in this program, and that's why you're trying to cover up your tracks now.

Mr. Speaker, not once did the Minister of Agriculture provide the opposition member responsible, the critic responsible, the member from Morse, a preview of the Bill when the opposition member repeatedly asked to see its contents. Right from the start, right from the outset, right from the outset, Mr. Speaker, we asked and farm people asked and farm groups asked if they could see the contents of this Bill.

The Speaker: — Order, order. Though there's no particular rule in the House that prohibits the kind of action that I'm seeing from my right, but every member has an obligation to try and improve the decorum in the House and to continue to keep order in this House. That kind of demonstration does absolutely nothing to improve the decorum or the order in the House, and I ask members to please stop that kind of action. Order, order.

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Not once did the Minister of Agriculture provide opposition members responsible . . . the critic for Agriculture, the member from Morse. Not once did he offer an opportunity for the critic to see the Bill, Mr. Speaker, to see the infamous Bill 87 which will go down in history, I'm sure, on the member from Rosetown-Elrose's résumé for ever, Mr. Speaker. Not once did our critic have the opportunity to talk to the minister about that Bill. Not once did he have any input into that Bill. Not once did anybody but a few draftspeople and a few lawyers on the government side have the opportunity to see that Bill.

And yet, Mr. Speaker, we repeatedly — repeatedly — asked for it. We repeatedly asked, Mr. Speaker, if we could speak to the Minister of Agriculture about it. We repeatedly asked the Minister of Agriculture to give the farm families of this province and the critic for Agriculture and the opposition the opportunity to see that Bill. Mr. Speaker, they're taking Bills of other nature all over the province; what would have been wrong with the farm families of this province having an opportunity to see the Bill, Mr. Speaker?

We asked it. The member from Morse asked it repeatedly. The reason why is clear, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Agriculture realizes that this is one of the most Draconian Bills that has ever hit this province, Mr. Speaker. Absolutely irresponsible, Mr. Speaker — absolutely

irresponsible.

He knew it was terrible legislation. He knew it was breaking the law. We knew it was breaking the law, Mr. Speaker. Our critic for Agriculture knew it was breaking the law. The minister knows it's breaking the law. He knows he's breaking contracts, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we know he's breaking contracts. The opposition members know it. The critic for Agriculture knows it, Mr. Speaker.

He's breaking the handshake with rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. He's breaking a trust that's been set down for decades in this province from ministers of Agriculture through the CCF (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation) days, NDP, Liberal, Conservative, and every other party throughout the history of this province. He's breaking that trust with rural Saskatchewan.

And we advised him, right from the very outset, that he was doing that, Mr. Speaker. Our critic for Agriculture and all opposition members together repeatedly pleaded with the minister, Mr. Speaker — repeatedly pleaded with the minister — to tell farm families what he was going to do to them. We repeatedly said to him, sir, you're breaking contracts with farm families, and it's wrong. And he knows it's wrong. And one wonders if this is the kind of example that this minister wants to set continually in this province, Mr. Speaker.

And I think, Mr. Speaker, the farm families of this province deserve better. And the opposition deserves better, Mr. Speaker. And the opposition critic for Agriculture deserves better. He deserves the opportunity to speak with the Minister of Agriculture about this program. He deserves the opportunity to have input into this program, just as the member from Shaunavon should have had the opportunity, just as the member from Humboldt or Quill Lakes or North Battleford or any of these other government members should have had the opportunity to speak with the minister about the program.

But yet, Mr. Speaker, no one has had that opportunity — no one's had it. Not once did the Minister of Agriculture seriously consider any of the suggestions offered by the opposition member responsible for the critic position of Agriculture, the member from Morse, to resolve the current situation for farm families. Not once did we get that opportunity. A grave situation only made worse by this proposed legislation, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in the prelude to the Bill . . . in the preamble to the Bill, it talks a lot about the different reasons why, trying to justify their actions. We've said right from the outset, the member from Morse has said right from the outset that the reason is clear. The reason is clear, Mr. Speaker, why they had to do that — to try and get around a constitutional challenge. Because they know they're going to have a constitutional challenge on their hands. Lawyers from all over the province are taking up the case, Mr. Speaker. They're just waiting for the opportunity to jump at this. This is where lawyers cut their teeth on stuff like this, Mr. Speaker. This is where they make a name for themselves.

And the member from Saskatoon, the lawyer, he would

know that.

An Hon. Member: — Idylwyld.

Mr. Boyd: — Idylwyld, exactly. He would know that, although he's probably not competent enough to do it, but nevertheless he would know that.

We offered the advice right from the outset, Mr. Speaker, that the member from Rosetown-Elrose should have accepted. He should have accepted that advice from us, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in court actions already proceeding against this government, the Bill states that:

. . . a court shall not consider any principle or law or in equity that would require adequate, reasonable or any notice with respect to . . . amendments or changes to . . . (the) contract . . .

"I think that's the most disturbing aspect", is what one Saskatoon lawyer is saying, Mr. Speaker. And that's the same advice that we've been giving the Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Speaker.

There are two challenges that the lawyers of Saskatchewan feel that this government is on shaky grounds and will be taken to court for, Mr. Speaker. First she would argue that the GRIP is a tripartite program involving the farmer, province and federal government.

This Bill affects the federal government and because provincial governments can't make legislation binding Ottawa, this Bill is unconstitutional, one lawyer suggests, Mr. Speaker. A well-known, a well-known Saskatchewan lawyer, a well-known farm lawyer, a lawyer who has taken all kinds of court actions against governments, or stood on behalf of farmers, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Second, she would argue the Bill contravenes the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture knows that. I'm sure his legal advice is telling him exactly that. He has all kinds of lawyers on his side of the House, Mr. Speaker. The Premier himself is a lawyer. He knows that it's unconstitutional, is my guess, Mr. Speaker.

(1030)

We offered the advice right from the beginning. The advice has been given on time and time and time again, Mr. Speaker, from the member from Morse, the opposition critic for Agriculture. It's been given numerous times to the member from Rosetown-Elrose and yet he won't change his mind, Mr. Speaker.

The member from Estevan, indeed our entire caucus, offered advice that was varied and logically thought out, quite unlike the Bill at hand which only serves to save the government money, Mr. Speaker. That's been the motivation right from the start.

They thought the program was too rich for farmers, Mr. Speaker. They thought the farm families of Saskatchewan were going to get too much — the farm families of

Saskatchewan were going to get too much. And we advised that right from the start, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Our member from Morse, our opposition critic for Agriculture, has told the Minister of Agriculture that, Mr. Speaker. And that's why we think the Minister of Agriculture should start meaningful discussions with the opposition critic for Agriculture.

But he hasn't done that, Mr. Speaker. He refuses to do that. Why does he refuse to do that, Mr. Speaker? Because he knows the Finance minister and the Premier have told him to cut back on agriculture. Cut it back to the bone. Make these people bleed for supporting other parties in previous elections, Mr. Speaker. And the minister knows that, we know that, the member from Morse knows that, and that's why we're trying to give good, solid advice to the Minister of Agriculture now.

We have said right from the outset that farmers should have their day in court, Mr. Speaker, Deputy Speaker. They should have their day in court. That's been the basis of this whole argument, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Why will the member from Rosetown-Elrose not allow farmers to have their day in court, Mr. Speaker? Because he knows they're wrong. He knows the government is wrong. He knows that the contract was valid. He knows that the farmers have a legitimate case. He knows that the farm families are deserving.

He knows that the farm families have set out in their court case that the difference between '91 and '92 GRIP is \$27.20 an acre. And we've advised that right from the outset, Mr. Speaker. And that's been clearly stated in a court of law, Mr. Speaker — \$27.20 an acre is the definable hurt that Saskatchewan farm families are feeling as a result of the Minister of Agriculture's actions.

And we've advised that. The member from Morse has advised that in question period and in speeches throughout this session, Mr. Speaker — \$27.20 an acre is the definable hurt. And that member knows that. Twenty-seven dollars and twenty cents an acre times 31 million seeded acres in this province comes up to just short of \$900 million. That could be, that could be the liability that this minister and his government is facing and all of Saskatchewan is facing.

Now we don't know what way the court case is going to go, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Agriculture has advice that says that they will win the court case against farm families. And yet other lawyers around the province are saying there's a very legitimate case, a very legitimate case that the farmers have. And we, through the member from Morse, have said time and time again to the member from Rosetown-Elrose that that is the reason, the clear reason why the courts have to decide. The courts have to decide this, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Agriculture yesterday in question period even said so himself, well I guess the courts will have to decide. That's what he said, Mr. Deputy Speaker. He said, I guess the courts will have to decide.

Well why not, Mr. Deputy Speaker, why not accept the advice of the opposition and the member from Morse, the opposition critic for Agriculture; why not accept that advice and move this thing forward as quickly as

possibly, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Why not move this thing forward, this legislation forward as quickly as possible, the court-hearing of it? Otherwise the farm families of this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, will be forced to do it, to shoulder the cost themselves at a time when they can ill-afford to.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that advice has been offered. I think the member from Rosetown-Elrose should accept that advice and try and get this behind his government, try and get this piece of legislation behind his government, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Even his Premier is giving him the same kind of advice, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the member from Morse, the opposition critic for Agriculture, is giving him.

Outside the Assembly the Premier deflected reporters' questions about whether the rights of farmers to sue the government were being legislated away, saying he didn't want to express a legal opinion. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, he could have expressed a legal opinion. He knew full well what the farmers are saying is correct. He knew full well what the opposition is saying is correct. He knew full well that the member from Morse, the opposition critic for Agriculture, is correct. The Premier knows that.

And he goes on to say, the courts will have to decide that, Mr. Speaker . . . Deputy Speaker. The courts will have to decide that. Well why doesn't he take the initiative and tell, instruct, command, demand that the member from Rosetown-Elrose do this action and take it to the Appeal court in Saskatchewan? Why doesn't he do that, Mr. Speaker? It's the same advice we've been giving him right from the outset. Why doesn't he do that, Mr. Speaker? I don't know.

Why doesn't the Minister of Justice do that? Why doesn't he at least stand in his place and answer some questions about it, Mr. Deputy Speaker? The member from Estevan and the member from Morse and other members have repeatedly asked the Minister of Justice about questions about this Bill, Mr. Speaker. And yet what happens?

The member from Rosetown-Elrose, in his capacity of Agriculture minister, quasi-judicial minister, I guess, stands in his place and says, no, no, no, can't do that, can't have this happening, can't have the farm families in court, taking me to court. I might make a mistake on the stand. I might say something that's wrong. I might admit that I'm wrong. I might, under questioning from a good lawyer, admit that I'm wrong. I might accidentally tell the truth. I might accidentally tell the truth, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That's what the member from Rosetown-Elrose is afraid of. He might accidentally tell the truth.

We've got a Bill that's legal fiction before us, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and we have said that right from the outset. The member from Morse, the opposition critic for Agriculture, has said that right from the outset, that this Bill is like legal fiction. And the member from Rosetown-Elrose knows it and he should accept the advice . . . and he's even suggested himself, even suggested himself, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the courts might have to decide. The Premier agrees. The courts will have to decide, says the Premier.

On the issue of retroactivity, changing contracts, the Premier said that the larger public interest justified what was being done to the GRIP program and to the farmers. What larger public interest in Saskatchewan is there right now than farm families? What larger public interests does the Minister of Agriculture have in mind? What larger public interests does the Minister of Finance and the Minister of . . . pardon me, the Premier of this province have in mind?

What larger public interest is there right now than saving rural Saskatchewan, than saving farm families? Can any one of the government members tell us what larger public interests the government has in mind? Can the member from Humboldt tell me what larger public interest the government has in mind? Can the member from Shaunavon or the member from Saskatoon Broadway, what larger public interest do you have in mind here?

Saskatchewan's rural revenge, I suggest, is the public interest that they have in mind. Saskatchewan's public interest is agriculture in this crisis that we're facing, Mr. Speaker. What larger public interest does the member from Saskatoon Broadway have in mind here? Her farm family has supported agriculture for . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. I want to remind the member that his remarks should be pertinent to the subamendment that's before us. And I find that the member is straying, and therefore I encourage him to get back on the subamendment.

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Right from the outset, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture has not taken the time, has not taken any time whatsoever, to discuss this program or changes in the program with our opposition critic for Agriculture, the member from Morse.

And the member from Morse, I'm sure, is wondering as well, and the Minister of Agriculture has to wonder, when the Premier instructs him that we have a larger public interest in mind than farm families. We wonder. The member from Morse wonders. I'm sure he'd like to discuss it with the member from Rosetown-Elrose, what larger public interest they have in mind.

Even though, Mr. Deputy Speaker, even though the member . . . the Premier, the member from Saskatoon Riversdale and the Premier of this province, says that the government . . . or pardon me, that the issue will have to be decided in court, why, Mr. Deputy Speaker, won't the Minister of Agriculture take that advice? Why won't he, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Why won't the member from Saskatoon Broadway or the member from Shaunavon or the member from Humboldt, why won't they talk to the Minister of Agriculture, see if we can't get this behind us?

We have asked through our member, opposition member from Morse, Mr. Deputy Speaker, why wasn't an agreement reached between the Agriculture two representatives, the member from Rosetown-Elrose and the member from Morse? Was it pride, Mr. Minister? Is that why you wouldn't initiate contact with the opposition critic? Was it pride, Mr. Minister? Was it

stubbornness, Mr. Minister? Was that the reason why you wouldn't initiate contact with the opposition critic for Agriculture? Was it cost cutting, Mr. Minister? Was that the reason why you wouldn't initiate discussions? Is that the reason, Mr. Minister? The budget gives that impression, gives that clear indication that agriculture, in your judgement, had to be cut back. Was that the reason why, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

I think Mr. Minister of Agriculture is the scapegoat for this government, Mr. Speaker. I think he's the scapegoat. And I kind of feel sorry for him a little bit, Mr. Deputy Speaker. He's been told by the Minister of Finance and the Premier to cut this program back, in spite of advice that we have been giving him and the member from Morse has been giving him right from the outset, that this program shouldn't be cut back, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in spite of that advice. I think he's the scapegoat, scapegoat for a government that wants to cut this program back.

And we've asked the minister right from the outset, the member from Morse has suggested GRIP '91 or '92. That could have been an option. The federal government was willing to participate. The federal government said they'd pick up part of the cost of administering two programs, side-by-side programs, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That was one option.

Another option was taking it to the Appeal court. Another option was just simply letting the court action in Melville proceed, and they wouldn't do that. What did they do? They go to the court, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and they try and intimidate farmers in this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, by slapping a \$750,000 bond on them. That's what they did. I'm sure some of the back-benchers aren't even aware of that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We were aware of it. The member for Morse, our opposition critic for Agriculture, was there, witnessed it, saw it for himself, heard it with his own ears.

The government, Mr. Deputy Speaker — I don't know on whose instructions; I presume it was the Minister of Agriculture; he wouldn't initiate any discussions with our opposition critic, but I assume it was on his instructions — tried to scare the farmers off, tried to scare the farmers off of this court action. Everyone in this province remembers, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Agriculture tried to scare the farm families of this province off their court action by putting a \$750,000 bond in front of them that they'd have to ante up in order to be able to take this crooked government to court, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, they know they're wrong. The only way to get around it is to change the legislation. We've advised right from the beginning that they shouldn't do that.

(1045)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, \$750,000 bond was placed before farmers in this province in order to try and intimidate them into not taking action against this minister. The member from Morse, our opposition critic in Agriculture, advised people throughout this province that that's the kind of thing that they can expect from this government. That's the kind of intimidation that they can expect.

He tried to initiate talks with the Minister of Agriculture about changes in the program, made numerous suggestions to the minister. But he wouldn't have any part of it, simply wouldn't have any part of changes in the program, Mr. Speaker. And as I said, I think he's the scapegoat for the program. And I feel a little bit sorry for him. He'll be the shortest minister of Agriculture in the history of Saskatchewan probably.

What will it be if he's . . . Let's see. The session winds up, we'll say, about the end of September, somewhere in there — maybe middle of October. That'll be about the date I suspect we'll get out of here. It'll be somewhere in there. We've said that right from the outset. We've said that right from the outset. It'll be somewhere in there, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And then he'll be let go. So it'll be 11 months approximately, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We've tried to initiate talks with this man. Our opposition critic from Agriculture has tried to initiate talks, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But why won't he listen?

Why wasn't an agreement reached which would've seen government offer farmers a choice? That option was explained; that option was put forward.

It would have been a situation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that farm families I think could have lived with, an agreement which would have clearly shown the government which GRIP program is more beneficial to farmers — a program, a side-by-side program that would have offered farmers an opportunity for farmers to decide. What would have been wrong with that, Mr. Minister of Agriculture? What would have been wrong with that?

An Hon. Member: — Money.

Mr. Boyd: — Money. Ah, my colleague says money. That's right.

An Hon. Member: — The committee rejected it.

Mr. Boyd: — Oh, the committee rejected it, did they? Oh, the committee rejected it, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The committee probably didn't even have the authority to make recommendations and changes in this program, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture, it was suggested a number of times the federal government would have participated in it. They said they would. They'd help; they'd shoulder the cost for side-by-side programs.

It would have been an interesting time in Saskatchewan for the Minister of Agriculture to see farmer after farmer after farmer in this province opting for '91 GRIP. It would have been an interesting and humbling experience, I'm sure, to see about 80 per cent of the farmers or more, is my guess, probably.

If you accept the results of the survey done by the farmers' advocate group — and I don't know why anybody wouldn't accept them, Mr. Deputy Speaker — is something in the range of about — here it is here, Mr. Deputy Speaker . . . (inaudible) . . . Well the Minister of

Agriculture says it isn't correct.

Well I suggest, Minister of Agriculture, you probably got a copy of this as well. We got a copy of it. The Minister of Agriculture did get a copy of it, I'm sure.

Mr. Speaker, the member from Morse, our opposition critic for Agriculture, got a copy of it. All of the opposition members got a copy of it. Hopefully all of the farmers of Saskatchewan got a copy of it, and it said . . . and we advised it right from the beginning. The opposition member from Morse in questions to the minister said to him: the farmers want '91 GRIP in large numbers. And you have the authority to offer that, sir — the Government of Saskatchewan.

Here's what the survey said, Mr. Speaker, and I think it's pertinent to the discussions because we offered that advice to the minister:

The Government of Saskatchewan has clearly and adequately consulted with farmers before approving changes in the plan.

Two point three per cent of farmers in the province agree — 2.3 per cent. That's gets down right into the hard-core support of the NDP, is my guess. That's rock bottom. Friends and families of members would be about 2.3 per cent. Friends and families of the NDP government would be about the 2.3 per cent.

And 97.7 per cent of farmers, 97.7 per cent of farmers said that they were not fairly or adequately consulted by the government. That's fairly significant, Mr. Deputy Speaker — 97.7 per cent. Statistically that . . . and you might as well round it off and call it a hundred. If you exclude the members of the families of the government side, it would be 100 per cent, I'm sure.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's even higher than the . . . 97.7 per cent, Mr. Deputy Speaker, 97.7 is even higher than the number of votes that the Minister of Agriculture won with — 97 votes. Oh, he won in the 80s, I think it was somewhere. What was it, Minister of Agriculture, 81?

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. Again I want to remind the member that the question that's before the Assembly is a subamendment. And the subamendment proposed to alter some of the terms of an amendment. And therefore, the member should try to explain to the Assembly why it is the terms of the amendment should be changed to those of the subamendment.

The member is going off onto tangents and is not trying to make his remarks pertinent to the subamendment. I'll give the member another chance, but he should make sure that his remarks tie in to the subamendment.

Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I sincerely apologize for not restricting my comments to this, but it's hard. The farm families of Saskatchewan, I'm sure, find it hard to accept this kind of thing from a government that said that they were going to be so open and honest, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

We've advised the Minister of Agriculture . . . the member

from Morse, the opposition critic for Agriculture has been trying to give advice to this member, the Minister of Agriculture, right from the outset. Not one thing has been . . . not one little shred of advice has been accepted. What one little shred of advice has been accepted by this minister?

And the Farmer's Advocate, it goes on in their survey . . . and we suggested that their survey was correct to the Minister of Agriculture, and he knows it. The second question, Mr. Deputy Speaker:

The changes to the plan are injurious to farmers participating in the plan by significantly reducing the level of protection while increasing the cost to the farmer of maintaining his or her coverage.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, 95.8 per cent of the people, the farm folks of this province, believe that this program is not a good program.

And it reduces the level of protection enjoyed under the previous program, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It reduces that protection. We have advised that right from the outset. We're getting down closer to the member for Rosetown's numbers here — 95.8. We're getting a little closer all the time, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The next question, and it has been put forward by the member from Morse on numerous occasions:

A comprehensive review of the plan through direct and meaningful consultation with farmers is required (required) before implementation of any present or future changes to the plan.

Ninety-seven point six per cent of the people agree with that, Mr. Speaker. Two point four — the members rallied their families around them once again — two point four per cent of the people oppose that, Mr. Speaker; 97.6 agreed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the member from Morse suggested on numerous occasions that the Minister of Agriculture should accept that advice, but he didn't, Mr. Deputy Speaker. He wouldn't even look at the survey is my guess. Why wouldn't he accept the advice of farm families all over this province?

And the fourth question was:

I'm in favour of restoring the 1991 plan pending a comprehensive review of the plan and any changes to it.

Ninety-five point eight per cent of the people agreed . . . of the farm families agreed with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And we offered that advice up to the Minister of Agriculture and he wouldn't accept it — 95.8 cent of the farm families in this province.

And the members over here and the members opposite on the government side, they all are aware of this survey; they all got copies of it. The farmers' advocate told us they all got copies of it.

And yet the Minister of Agriculture stands up here day after day after day in question period and in speeches, and his members, they all rally around him and they all say, farmers want '92 GRIP — they all want '92 GRIP. And the Minister of Agriculture says, they all want '92 GRIP, in spite of . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — Ninety-five point eight per cent of the people disagree with you — 95.8 per cent of the people disagree with you. Friends and families are the only ones that support you on this thing. Friends and your families are the only ones, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We offered that advice to the Minister of Agriculture and he wouldn't accept it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if '92 GRIP is so good, even in spite of, in spite of the illegal nature that it was introduced — and the Minister of Agriculture knows that and it's been advised from this side of the House to him numerous times — in spite of the illegal nature that it was introduced, why then, Mr. Minister, is 95 per cent of the farmers of this province saying to you, I want '91 GRIP back? Why then is it, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and Minister of Agriculture, that 95 per cent of the farmers of this province when surveyed suggest that they would like to have '91 GRIP back?

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I said in my earlier comments, the process has been botched up right from the very beginning, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They missed a deadline, they missed a deadline — they know it — March 15 deadline was missed. And the member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster knows it was missed. My guess is in all her years as a school teacher, if your contract would have been retroactively stripped away from you, ma'am, you wouldn't have agreed with it.

And we advised that right from the very outset, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The member from Morse said to the Minister of Agriculture, farm families don't like this action. People throughout this entire province don't like contracts being stripped away from them, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, to conclude my remarks, the Minister of Agriculture is wrong and he knows it. He doesn't want to get drug into court, so he's had to bring in legislation that says you can't take him to court. You can't take him to court.

And I'm wondering how the member from Nipawin, how the member from Nipawin or the member from Weyburn — a couple of honourable men amongst a bunch of unhonourable people — can accept that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. How can he accept that in this province? How can those two members — and there's probably other examples — but how can those two members particularly, accept that, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

Well the farm families of Saskatchewan can't accept it. And that's why, Mr. Minister of Agriculture, they're going to drag you kicking and screaming into the Supreme Court of Canada, and they're going to get the truth out of you one way or another. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Devine: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too will speak to the amendment that has substituted the words “the Minister of Agriculture and the Opposition Member Responsible for Agriculture” should have been discussing rather than invoking closure, and in the last part of the amendment:

because closure was used to unilaterally force introduction of this Bill in the Assembly.

Now we firmly believe, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Agriculture and the critics for Agriculture, the minister for Crop Insurance, the critics for Crop Insurance, could have reached an agreement before this fiasco and this legislative and parliamentary and legal boondoggle was initiated by the NDP administration.

We could have discussed it, come to a conclusion to put money in the farmers' hands in a fair fashion. We could have picked up on the federal offer for a modest amount of money. We could have added another \$27-and-some-cents an acre to people who were dried out or froze out. Much simpler than all of this hassle and all of this extremely difficult situation.

(1100)

What's happened, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that because of the closure — and you know this very well, and I'm going to summarize my remarks from various editorials across the province — that it's poisoned the atmosphere in the Legislative Assembly. It's poisoned the atmosphere between government and opposition. It's poisoned the relationship between farmers and the NDP administration. It's put fear into the hearts of anybody that has a contract in the province of Saskatchewan, so all the lawyers are looking at it.

And rather than have the two ministers, the minister and the critic sit down and talk about the consequences of all this, they just went right ahead and did it anyway and they poisoned the atmosphere in the entire province, because people now are talking about courts and about suing and about taking the minister to court and going to the Supreme Court and the Draconian nature of the closure rules used in this Legislative Assembly.

All of that because the minister and the critic couldn't sit down and talk about agriculture. Now that's the Minister of Agriculture's record; that's his attitude; that's his *modus operandi*; that's the kind of personality this individual must be. He couldn't sit down and talk about Agriculture with the critics here. He had to go and poison all this atmosphere in the legislature, outside the legislature, have court cases thrown at him, have internal problems in the NDP administration. All for what? Because you couldn't sit and talk about agriculture?

And we've had a crisis. Everybody here campaigned on the agriculture crisis. It's serious business out there. But no, can't talk about it. We'll ramrod our changes through. As a result, Mr. Speaker, you have . . . the NDP have generated bad blood. They've poisoned the atmosphere

in this Legislative Assembly and between farmers and the government and between all kinds of people in the government.

There's a bad attitude, a negative, negative, contrary, unco-operative attitude has been developed around an NDP administration that is very arrogant, very bully-like. They don't care to talk. They don't care to discuss. You either do it my way or the highway. That's why this amendment is here. They used closure when they didn't have to. They've poisoned the atmosphere, which means you're into a fighting mood, suing mood. There's no trust. And as a result, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you get this feeling of shame by the NDP administration, a feeling of guilt. And they admit it and they talk about it; they made a serious mistake. They feel guilty because they're caught being illegal; they're caught being unconstitutional; they're caught being unparliamentary; and they're caught being undemocratic.

And they feel the guilt with that, and it's weighing them down. So the shame and the guilt is the result of the inability of the Minister of Agriculture to sit and talk about agriculture without hollering and screaming and blaming people. If he had only talked, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we wouldn't have the guilt and the shame that's pervaded the NDP administration. Because what they've done has been illegal; it's unconstitutional; it's against the Charter of Rights and Freedoms; it's against this parliamentary process; it's undemocratic; and it's against everything they said they would never do. So they feel awful about it. And they got caught with it, so they're just going to bully their way right ahead anyway.

And that's the kind of environment we have in the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I know that you're aware of it. Going to do it anyway. It doesn't matter how guilty we feel or how much shame or how poisoned the atmosphere, how harmful it is to the public, we are going to do it anyway because we are NDP.

And just the sheer arrogance of that is unbelievable to the public of Saskatchewan. Because they said, how can they stand on one side of the legislature and tell everybody that they're going to do something; how can they stand on the soap-boxes out there in rural Saskatchewan and say, we'll protect you, we'll give you the cost of production, we'll get you more money, we'll lower your taxes, we'll do all of that, and then come back and do this kind of thing and then not even discuss it between critics because they feel so guilty?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the reason this amendment is even here is because of their guilt-complex. They don't know how to talk about it. They're at a loss to talk about it. What do they say now? How do they even open up the door to discussion? They've caught themselves. They're skewered on their own petard because they dug this hole and they felt guilty; and now they kind have a bunker mentality. They don't know how to open up and talk about it. How do you open the door now? How do you kind of reach out to farmers and say, well I would help you? How do you reach out to the critic here and talk?

The whole thing has been poisoned. It's a terrible atmosphere. We've never seen such an ugly atmosphere

in Saskatchewan's political history as we do right now in the province of Saskatchewan. Suits and lawsuits, constitutional lawyers, NDP lawyers, other people saying, they're illegal. They're unconstitutional. It breaks the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. And they don't care because they can't talk to people. They just ram it ahead.

And they're digging themselves such a hole, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that they'll write books about the incompetence of the NDP administration trying to impose this poisoned pens in this poisoned atmosphere on not only the Legislative Assembly but the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

So my remarks today on this amendment are that closure was not necessary. And closure was only used because they couldn't communicate. And they dug themselves into a hole that even they didn't believe had any opening.

A couple of comments on GRIP itself that were open for discussions and a couple of comments with respect to closure that are relevant, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I want to start with some of the GRIP quotes.

There are many, many people who have suggested ideas for compromise between the government and the farmers. And the farmers just want help. They're going to . . . Some of them will have drought problems and some of them will have frost problems and some of them — a lot of them — have income problems. All they want is the NDP government to help them. Just be there. That's all they ask.

They've come from all corners of the province. Some from Humboldt, some from Maple Creek, some from Prince Albert, some from Meadow Lake, some from North Battleford, some from Turtleford, Craik. They just want their new elected government to be reasonable.

And they've said over and over again on the FeedGAP (feed grain adjustment program) program, for Heaven sakes, please defend us against interprovincial competition. When it comes to insuring themselves and their farm, they said, we have lots of suggestions. No government program is perfect, but we've got some really good ideas for you if you would initiate them and initiate these discussions, and we'll back you up.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have here a list of what they did do, which means they didn't listen and they had nothing to bring to the table. Newspaper quotes from the Premier to the Minister of Economic Development, the Minister of Agriculture, farmers, all kinds of people who can't believe the NDP administration would be so out of touch and so unable, with no capacity, frankly, to communicate.

Here is from the *Star-Phoenix*, July 31, 1992:

On the eve of a political showdown, (the NDP) Premier . . . swept into North Battleford Thursday to spread the gospel of good GRIP.

But just a few kilometres away, farmers remained oblivious to the message.

And I quote the farmer:

"You don't have to have a sharp pencil to see the program isn't as good," said Stewart Mitchell, the owner of a mixed farm just south-west of the Battlefords.

The *Star-Phoenix*, July 31, 1992.

That farmer gave the Premier of Saskatchewan good, positive suggestions that the Minister of Agriculture could have discussed with the critic here. Not difficult to do. Any place that the Minister of Agriculture or the Premier go and want to talk to farmers, they'll give them good, solid suggestions.

Mr. Mitchell says, "You don't have to have a sharp pencil to see the program isn't as good." Well then, you'd think that the NDP administration would say, well what would make it reasonable. Maybe we have some ideas here. We could work it out between the opposition and the government so that in fact we could have farmers a little bit happier, a little bit more comfortable, a bit of a safety net. That's what the GRIP insurance is all about. That's why you take fire insurance, automobile insurance — safety net in case you have a problem. Farmers have got problems in the international market and with weather.

The quote goes on:

. . . the argument of Premier Romanow that the situations are not analogous is as vacant as the NDP's legislative morality. He says that because the NDP campaigned to change the Gross Revenue Insurance Plan (GRIP) it has the democratic right to push through its bill.

But did the NDP campaign on the promise of making changes after the GRIP deadline and using the power of the government to (do this), as the Tories say, "tamper with evidence" in a case now before the courts?

However the most offensive aspect to the government's behaviour has been the way it's ramming through arbitrary changes to the legislature's rules. Ignoring the parliamentary tradition of all-party consensus on such changes, the NDP has applied 30-minute time limits to bell-ringing. And to do it, the NDP brought down the heavy fist of closure to silence debate after only four days. This can only be described as a tyranny of the majority.

The *Star-Phoenix*, July 18, 1992.

The editorials in the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix* call this closure and this process "a tyranny of the majority". A tyranny of the majority: Saskatoon editorial board. A tyranny of the majority. We've heard all kinds of pitiful things that they've been called, but a tyranny of this massive majority because they are so afraid of the Agriculture critic they can't talk to him. There's only 10 of us here, and this large majority is now being called a tyranny because it can't communicate. So when it can't communicate, what does it do, Mr. Deputy Speaker? It

says, we're going to bring in closure, we'll just force it through, we'll muzzle the opposition, we'll shut them up.

June 23, here's what the NDP Premier said:

While he said he can see the Tories' point, the premier said the government won't withdraw its legislation.

Well how about that? The NDP Premier says he can see the Tories' point. It's about rights. It's about the legitimate rights of men and women. It's about contracts. And then he goes on to say, but we won't withdraw the legislation.

I wonder why, and the farmers want to know, and the public wants to know, why the NDP administration is so bent on jamming this through when they know they're wrong. They admit . . . the Premier admits that we have a good point. He admits there's a legal point. He admits it's going to be in court. He admits contracts are valid. He admits people have rights between the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. He knows a great deal about the constitution.

And yet he won't change and he won't advise his Minister of Agriculture to communicate with the opposition critic so they can get out of this mess. Why won't they just communicate and talk with us and get out of this mess? Why are they digging the hole deeper and deeper and deeper and deeper? Nobody understands that. What's the political gain? What's the big advantage? To the farmer there's none. But to the political party of the NDP, why do they do this?

He's got the *Star-Phoenix* calling it "a tyranny of the majority". He's got lawyers ripping at him. He's got the caucus upset. He's got parliamentarians saying, I've never seen anything like this. What's it all . . . What's the game plan? What's the plan?

Isn't it easier just to have the two men communicate here and talk about agriculture and what you can do in GRIP. Because the NDP Premier says, the Tories have a point. He can see their point. While he said he can see the Tories' point, the Premier said the government won't withdraw its legislation.

Well what's that tell you? That tells you they're just caught and being extremely ornery. Extremely ornery. Why don't they just admit they made a silly mistake; the Minister of Agriculture made a silly mistake; they weren't watching him close enough; the agriculture caucus or the whole NDP caucus just didn't have a hold of it. As they said and they admit to us, they messed up. They just blew it.

Why do they keep making it worse and worse and worse and worse by this lack of communication and pile up all this unparliamentary procedure, this undemocratic process, this illegal process, this humbling, humiliating exercise where every one of them are going to have their speeches read back to them because it is exactly opposite to what they campaigned on.

And here's the quote, the famous one, the NDP Premier in the *Star-Phoenix*, June 23:

I worry about contracts and all of that. I mean, one has certain rights. That's where the merit of the PC walkout is.

(1115)

Now there is an NDP Premier standing in his place, being interviewed by the *Star-Phoenix* and said: I'm worried about democratic rights, under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. That's the validity of the PC (Progressive Conservative) argument. And he goes on to say, and that's why it's going to have to be settled by the courts.

But then what he doesn't explain, and people are still asking, why then does he bring in legislation that eliminates the farmers' right to go to court? Why does he talk about the courts when he knows in this Legislative Assembly he's going to take away all rights of access to the courts? It can only mean one thing — it's going to be referred to the Court of Appeal in Saskatchewan and then on to the Supreme Court.

So here we have a Minister of Agriculture, over \$23 million, forcing the NDP administration to end up in the Supreme Court with unparliamentary, unprecedented, illegal, unconstitutional violations of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, unprecedented changes politically and economically and legally and morally, because the Minister of Agriculture wouldn't communicate. Pretty fascinating. Very fascinating.

You would wonder, who's in charge? Well how do they explain this in their caucus? How did we get into this mess? What happened? Who wasn't minding the store? What in the world is going on? Why didn't we just saw it off with the federal government and make some payments? It could cost us 23, \$24 million or whatever. The farmers would be happy. But they're into this big, big mess because they wouldn't communicate.

The Minister of Agriculture says, we'll get around it somehow. And I'm just a little bit smarter than everybody else, and I don't have to be a lawyer. And he just went right on and got the constitutional lawyers in the Department of Justice to put every "whereas" you can imagine in the Bill to protect them and then eliminate the access to the law. And it's against the constitution, it's against the charter of rights. And all of this mess because the Minister of Agriculture wouldn't communicate. What a mistake.

And then what happens, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it forces not only this on the whole party and on the province, but then every member over there has to stand and vote for this mess — vote for the closure, vote for the limited of speaking, vote for the unparliamentary nature of this, vote for the illegality of this. And they have to eat those words, and it's a humbling, humbling experience. Because they're doing exactly what they thought they never would do and they know they don't believe in.

And if there was a free vote in here and the only judge was the good Lord Himself, they'd vote and say, on my conscience, I'm not supporting this. And they know it. If there was a free vote in here and said, on the basis of principle — there, they wouldn't vote for this. They

wouldn't support the Minister of Agriculture. He's an NDP colleague, so regardless of what I'm going to do, I guess is the old union hall tactic, I'm going to do it anyway even though it's bad, it's illegal, it's unparliamentary, it's disgusting. I'm going to do it anyway because the union boss says I've got to do it. Well isn't that a great tradition? Isn't that just the fanciest, fairest tradition we can imagine here in this Legislative Assembly in the province of Saskatchewan?

The NDP leader in the *Star-Phoenix* goes on to say this:

The substance of what we did is right. And if it's the substance which is at issue in terms of our fiscal picture and the like, process becomes a little less important.

The end justifies the means. Well, well, well. Have we ever heard that before? The end justifies the means. We heard it from their member from Regina Albert South. He says, we don't care about the law; it's just the process they got. Guilty or innocent doesn't matter; it's just the process. The end justifies the means.

Here is the Premier of Saskatchewan, the NDP Premier saying process becomes a little less important. We'll change the rules. We'll take away your right in court and we'll do all this because there's a higher calling here — which they haven't explained — but we'll go to the process . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The member from Prince Albert obviously is interested in this, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The process is a rotten process. It is absolutely a rotten process and they should be ashamed of this process. And when they say that they can do anything as long as the objective is a high ideal of theirs, then the process doesn't matter. Then the end justifies the means. The end justifies the means.

If that's the attitude that is pumped into the NDP Agriculture minister, no wonder he can't communicate. Because the end justifies the means. If we have to break the law, fair enough. If we have to break all constitutional tradition, fair enough; parliamentary tradition, fair enough; the process won't matter because we have some higher goal.

Can you believe that? The NDP Premier says that in the *Star-Phoenix*, June 23:

. . . if it's the substance which is at issue in terms of our fiscal picture and the like, process becomes a little less important.

So rights of people, morality, dignity, respect, the law, parliamentary tradition — all of those things become less important when the NDP's in power. What a hypocritical position to be in. And they're digging it deeper and deeper and deeper, and they're ashamed of it and they should be. And they want us not to talk about it? Unbelievable.

And on top of that, perhaps part of the guilt is they knew all along, they knew all along that if they won power on the basis of their hollow and false promises, that they

were going to stab people in the back like this, sure as we're sitting here.

And why they feel so guilty today and why they chirp from their seats is they knew they were going to do that. And that legacy will sit with the NDP for the rest of their life because all the hypocrisy and all that immorality is going to be recorded. And it's in *Hansard* and it's in this Legislative Assembly and it's going to be in court and it's going to be locked in lawsuits.

On the issue . . . again, and this is a quote from the *Leader-Post*, June 17 on GRIP:

Romanow was mum on the issue Tuesday for the second day in a row and didn't stop to answer questions from the media.

"I have nothing to say," he said, walking past reporters on his way to his office.

Asked again about the walk-out, he jokingly commented instead on the continuing constitutional negotiations.

The second day in a row — wouldn't comment. No comment from the NDP Premier on GRIP. We've had the second day in a row, the Attorney General of the province of Saskatchewan, an NDP lawyer, won't comment on the GRIP legislation. We've asked him in question period; we may ask him again today: will you refer this Bill that was unnegotiated to the Court of Appeal? Won't answer, no communication. Symbolic, it's very symbolic, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

We asked the Minister of Justice, an NDP lawyer in charge of drafting this Bill: will you comment on this Bill; will you refer it; will you take it to the Court of Appeal? And you know what, Mr. Deputy Speaker? No communication. Nothing back and forth. The legal critic has no communication with that critic over there, the minister in charge.

That's typical. That's why this amendment is here. They won't talk to people. They won't listen to people. And when we ask questions in here, they won't even stand in their place and answer. The belligerent Agriculture minister who is responsible for the whole bloody problem, he gets to stand up and talk about the legality of the situation.

The Deputy Speaker: — Order, order. I want to caution the member in the use of language. Some of the adjectives that he uses are perhaps not appropriate for this Chamber. And in doing so, also want to remind him that the discussion is on a subamendment, the terms of which are narrow, and I encourage him to restrict his remarks to the subamendment.

Mr. Devine: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker . . . or Deputy Speaker. The subamendment, obviously we're concerned about the Minister of Agriculture and the opposition member responsible for Agriculture not communicating. That's the whole basis. And that has led to closure.

Those three things are in there: the Minister of Agriculture, the opposition critic, and the resulting closure, a part of the subamendment.

When the NDP Premier is asked about that, asked about the communication, asked about the closure, he's mum. Quote is:

Romanow was mum on the issue Tuesday for the second day in a row and didn't stop to answer questions from the media.

"I have nothing to say," (the NDP Premier says) . . .

So not only did the Minister of Agriculture not communicate and fail to communicate, the Premier fails to communicate. You have nothing to say. Nothing to say. He's just taken away the farmers' rights. He's broken their contract. He's taken away their rights to go to court. And he's asked by the media and the NDP Premier says, nothing to say.

That isn't how he campaigned. He had lots to say when he was campaigning: there's a rural crisis; I'll give you the cost of production; we'll get more money from Ottawa; we'll help these farmers.

When asked after the election and when he's got them right by the back of the neck and he's pushing them down into the ground and not helping them, what does he say? "I have nothing to say" . . . Imagine!

Now if that's the attitude that has encouraged the Minister of Agriculture not to co-operate and not to consult and not to communicate with the opposition critic, then of course you're going to end up in this awful mess.

And the newspapers and the editorials are filled with these stories of non-communication, of guilt, of shame, of disgrace, of unconstitutional procedures. June 17, GRIP headline, *Star-Phoenix*, 1992: "Romanow still refuses to comment on the standoff." No communication. Won't communicate. Won't talk to us.

For the second day since returning from Eastern Canada, (the NDP Premier) . . . refused to comment on the standoff over his government's proposed legislation on the GRIP farm safety net.

June 17, 1992.

Then it's interesting, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when they do start to communicate with the media and with the public, they give the wrong information. So if they do kind of break out of their shell and their siege mentality all of a sudden, then out comes some haywire information. They give the wrong information.

Leader-Post, June 18, 1992, and here's the Minister of Economic Development, and the quote is — this is *Leader-Post*, June 18:

. . . Lingenfelter said the bell-ringing is costing taxpayers an extra \$27,000 a day.

While the NDP House Leader says it's 27,000 a day,

Legislative Assembly officials say the true figure — the true figure — is actually closer to \$1,000 a day.

So when they do communicate, they mislead the public. They don't tell the truth. They think they're campaigning again. They think they're campaigning again. Say anything they want during the campaign, make up figures, put it all out there, and then when we start to have communication in here — No. No communication. Not a word said. Would you comment on the GRIP? No, won't comment. Would you talk with us about GRIP before you begin closure? No, we won't do that.

So when they do comment, here's the NDP House Leader says, bell-ringing costs the taxpayers an extra 27,000 a day. And the Legislative Assembly officials say the true — the true figure, according to legislative officials — is closer to \$1,000 a day.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the stories of the lack of communication and the misleading information of the NDP pile up and pile up and pile up in editorials and comments and quotes, not in the legislative . . . not only here, but all across Saskatchewan.

It goes on to say that the House Leader . . . And this is the *Leader-Post*, June 19:

(NDP House Leader) . . . wouldn't commit to the ultimate removal of a clause that retroactively determines farmers received proper notice of the (GRIP) changes.

No communication where they would talk about co-operation. He wouldn't commit to that discussion. Instead goes out and talks to the media: I won't do that; I won't commit to that; I know that it's wrong; I know the farmers are in trouble; I know there's a rural crisis; but I won't admit to making changes; won't even commit to talk about changes.

(1130)

Now here's a dandy. This is June 13, 1992. This is the communication going back and forth between the government, the NDP administration, and the opposition. Now I say communication — the lack of communication. How's this for communication, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

Quote, *Leader-Post*, June 13, 1992:

NDP House leader Dwain Lingenfelter admitted Friday the bill covers up for the fact the government missed a March 15 deadline to notify farmers about changes to the GRIP program.

They admitted it. That's why they're ashamed, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They will admit that they actually broke the law. They admit that they broke contracts. They admit that they're hurting farmers. They missed the March 15 deadline. And because they made that big mistake, they said, well I will not communicate to try to fix it; I'll find some compromise for the farmers with the federal government. There's a good federal offer coming out for lots of money.

They won't communicate. So what we'll do is that we'll just admit we broke the law, but to cover ourselves and protect ourselves we'll bring in this Bill that prevents anybody from suing us. We'll get into closure so they can't talk about it. And we end up . . . here we are, discussing this amendment which says there has been no communication — inadequate communication between the Minister of Agriculture and the critic position here. And as a result we have closure.

And the NDP House Leader admits they made a mistake. He admits that they missed the deadline. He admits they broke the law. He admits all of that. And so they just have to find a way to get their hand-picked Minister of Agriculture out of trouble.

Star-Phoenix, April 29, 1992. This is the Minister of Agriculture. This is what he says. April 1992, the NDP Agriculture minister, quote:

Agriculture Minister Berny Wiens has threatened to bring in retroactive legislation changing the (GRIP) contracts, but he refused to comment on that on Tuesday.

He threatened the farmers. April 29 he was threatening them. Talk about the lack of communication. We go right back to April, May, June, July, and we're into August. He's been threatening them for four or five months.

Here's the quote:

Agriculture Minister Berny Wiens has threatened to bring in retroactive legislation changing (GRIP) . . .

So he's out there threatening the farmers. You get into line. Threatened the crop insurance agents. Threatening the members of the opposition, and maybe threatened his caucus. I don't know how they let him away with this. But he says, I will bring in legislation to cover this up. We'll fix it somehow. And he's threatening back in April. So that's five months.

No communication, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Five months of threats, five months of bullying people, five months of absolute shameful activity, hypocrisy. April, May, June, July, and August and then they take away rights; they take away the access to courts — unconstitutional.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture has threatened farmers, threatened us in the legislature and now he's being backed up by this Draconian piece of legislation which invokes closure.

Another quote. This is June 17, after his threats in April and . . . This is out of the *Leader-Post* June 17.

Agriculture Minister Berny Wiens was repeatedly asked whether changes to 1991 GRIP contracts after the March 15 deadline would create legal problems, say members of the crop insurance advisory committee.

Oh, he was repeatedly asked by the members of the

advisory committee if this would cause problems.

. . . Wiens told committee members: "We can get around it somehow".

June 17, 1992.

Now can you imagine, can you imagine, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what the Minister of Agriculture has told his caucus and told his NDP colleagues. He says, we have to do this; we've got to get around this somehow. Because if we don't get around it somehow, guess what's going to happen? We're going to go to court, the farmers are going to sue us, and the Minister of Agriculture is going to have to admit that he knew he broke the law.

And he doesn't want to go on the stand. The NDP Agriculture minister doesn't want to go into court, under oath, and have to talk about what he knew was breaking the law. He didn't want to do that. So he says to his caucus members, you have to give me this Bill so I won't get called to court.

Secondly, he doesn't want the Crop Insurance minister to end up going to court because then he might have to tell the truth. And under oath he'll have to tell him that he knew it was breaking the law and he had officials that knew that it was breaking the law. And under oath they'd have to tell that because the penalty for perjury is pretty serious.

He's got the advisory board members, Mr. Deputy Speaker. He doesn't want the advisory board members to go to court and have a lawyer ask them: is this what you really said; are these the concerns you talked about; did you advise the minister that it would be illegal. And they'd have to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, yes we did raise these concerns. We advised the minister that it would be illegal. And they would have to say that on the stand.

Now what does that do for the government's case? It makes the government case very, very weak. All the people that used to work in Crop Insurance, Mr. Deputy Speaker, could be called to the stand in a court case. And the NDP Agriculture minister does not want those people that he fired to be called before a judge and a jury or a court to tell what really happened in Crop Insurance when the NDP won — who was fired and why they fired them.

And they all knew that this was an illegal act and they knew the consequences to the farmers and they advised the minister and they would say: we advised the minister.

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. The Leader of the Opposition has spoken to the question that's before us. He now has an opportunity to put forward his comments on the subamendment, why it is that certain clauses of the amendment should be changed. The discussion therefore is quite narrow as to the points that are contained in the subamendment. I encourage him to make sure that his remarks are pertinent to the subamendment.

Mr. Devine: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. To help make that connection, the Minister of Agriculture has not communicated here because he knows that if he started

to negotiate seriously, changing this legislation, he could end up in court, and all of these awful things would happen. That's what's keeping him from communicating.

He doesn't want the Crop Insurance officials that he fired and the Crop Insurance minister fired to end up in court. Well they're going to end up in court anyway, and they're going to be called. But that's what he's afraid of. He doesn't want the fired agents to end up in court. Therefore he has to bring in this Bill; therefore there's nothing to communicate.

There's no give and take. There's no talk here. Because he's made up his mind he is not going to have himself, the officials, the agents, the fired people, the advisory members go to court and tell the truth. Therefore he is unable to communicate because he has nothing to give because he's locked into a legislative nightmare.

That's the facts, Mr. Deputy Speaker. He cannot communicate because he has nothing with give and take. There's no communication here because he has made up his mind he is not going to give. And he cannot afford to give because if he does he ends up in court with all of the people that advised him otherwise. And they can call in all kinds of people. That's the reason there's no communication.

Officials would testify. Farmers would testify. Agents would testify. Fired agents would testify. Fired Crop Insurance agents would testify. Advisory members would testify. And then they'd have to put the minister on the stand under oath. And guess what that would mean? He'd have to tell it as it really is. And he doesn't want that. And you can bet your boots, nobody in the NDP caucus wants that. That's serious business. Because he couldn't hide in here.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the connection is very clear. That man would not communicate with our critic because he couldn't afford to end up letting the farmer have his day in court. Because any good lawyer would bring in all those people that know the truth and they would tell the truth. And the minister would have to tell the truth. And he wouldn't be exempt from the little procedures that are out there in the real world by hiding in here. He'd have to tell it as it is.

On June 17, the minister went on to say . . . or the editorial does:

"Essentially, he (which is the NDP Agriculture minister) . . . didn't seem concerned," said the committee member who asked not to be identified. (Not to be identified.) "He thought we could get around that (legal question). . . He said he would get around it somehow."

Now here's a committee member, an advisory committee member not wanting to be identified, telling a few stories out of school on the Ag minister. He said, he seemed like he had a plan to get around this even though it's illegal. Don't tell him my name. But he was a little arrogant. He had a little plan. He was going to do something a little irregular here. But don't quote me. I won't let you have my name.

Well how would you like to put that fellow on the stand and say, what exactly went on in that meeting? Did you advise the minister that he was in trouble? Did you advise him that it was illegal? And then bring the agents and bring the Crop Insurance people and others in. Do you know what, Mr. Deputy Speaker? They'd all say that the Minister of Agriculture is in a lot of trouble. And he doesn't know how to get out of it.

And I'm sure they told him, if you actually pursued this further, they'd say, Mr. Minister, why don't you just come clean? Save yourself a lot of headaches, a lot of constitutional battles, a lot of legal battles. Just negotiate a settlement with the farmers. Get on with '93 GRIP, which we all could be involved with in designing, and quit trying to bring in the law and change the rules and change democratic process to cover your . . . tracks.

An Hon. Member: — Tracks?

Mr. Devine: — Your tracks, on GRIP. It was close.

Well he said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, he's going to get around it. Now we find out how he got around it. June 17, *Star-Phoenix*, quote:

. . . some members of the GRIP advisory committee warned the government about the deadline, but were told it wasn't a problem.

Boy, what a mistake that was. They were told by the NDP cabinet minister that GRIP wasn't a problem and the deadline wasn't a problem. They've never had such a headache in their political life. And he says, it's not a problem.

Boy, oh boy, don't they wish it was just a dream and they could wake up and say, oh gosh, I'm glad that's over. But now it's on the record. Now the dream lives and breathes day after day after day for the rest of your political life, as short as it's going to be.

You're going to have to live with this and experience it and it'll be fed back to you over and over and over and over again. Because this brand-new, novice NDP politician out of Rosetown says: oops, deadlines aren't a problem, the law isn't a problem; we'll get around it somehow. And he snookered the whole bunch of you into this.

The members know better. Anybody with any seasoned political experience over there says, holy smokes, how did we let this happen? My goodness. Well it isn't very entertaining for the farmers when they have to take the NDP administration to court.

Now here's a little bit of some of the funny stuff that goes on. Quote by the *Star-Phoenix*, June 17. First you get to talk to the committee members and they said, they advised the minister the GRIP deadline was a problem. But then you go ask the minister, and what does he say?

Asked by reporters Tuesday if the members of his (GRIP) committee had raised concerns about whether changes to GRIP after March 15 . . . had

been raised, Wiens said that was not the case.

Well who's telling the truth? The committee members said to the *Star-Phoenix*, we warned him and we told him that it was a problem. Then you go ask Mr. Wiens or ask the Minister of Agriculture if this was raised, and he says no, wasn't raised. Mr. Deputy Speaker, no wonder he has a problem in communicating. He says . . . he doesn't tell it as it is. He doesn't tell it as it is.

. . . members of the GRIP advisory committee warned the government about the deadline, but were told it wasn't a problem.

The NDP member says, we'll get around it somehow.

(1145)

Then when the reporters go to the NDP Minister of Agriculture and said, was it raised, he says no, wasn't raised. Well he's wrong on both accounts. It was raised and he knew it. He was warned. And his arrogance said, it doesn't matter, we'll get around it. And then when he's asked about it and he got caught about it, he had to kind of weasel out of it by saying, they didn't talk to me about it, when in fact is they did talk to him about it.

He deemed the conversation to have disappeared. He couldn't say that on a witness stand, Mr. Deputy Speaker. If he was hauled into court and that advisory member were sitting right beside him and the advisory member said, I warned the minister, the minister then couldn't get up and say: well no, you didn't. He'd have to say: well yes, he did tell me. Then the truth would come out.

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. I've listened again to the member and the member is not attempting in any way to relate his remarks to the amendment and the subamendment that are before us. The amendment proposes certain things. The subamendment proposes to make some amendments to that, to make some variations. It proposes to, for example, replace the words House leaders with that of the Minister of Agriculture and the opposition member responsible for Agriculture. You should be speaking to why those people as opposed to the House leaders. It proposes to drop some other words about a process, and says that the reason should be changed because closure was used unilaterally to force something in the Assembly. The member should be speaking to why the terms of the amendment are proposed, or should be changed, in accordance with the words in the subamendment. And therefore his remarks should be pertinent to that.

Mr. Devine: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Again, the Minister of Agriculture is incapable of communicating with the officials over here and our critics because of the hole he's dug himself into. And my whole argument here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is this man has dug himself into such a vicious, deep hole that he can no longer effectively communicate. Not only has he poisoned the relationship here, which is this amendment's about, but he has poisoned the relationship between himself and the media, and himself and the farmers, so that in fact he has nothing to negotiate.

And secondly, he does not want to be put on the witness stand to be forced to tell the truth, therefore he cannot communicate and negotiate any kind of an arrangement here which would free up the farmers to take him to court. That's the whole basis for the argument.

And farmers say about this attitude, and it's an attitudinal problem. Boyd Charles, spokesman for producers action committee, in the *Leader-Post* in April says: It's a sad state of affairs when farmers have to sue the government for breach of contract.

That's why we're into this closure. Because no communication. We had a contract. Just honour the contract, get on with it, or negotiate something better.

Now one of the reasons that there's no serious communication here, Mr. Speaker, is that the lawyers on the government side, the judges, and legal opinion is starting to mount that say that the NDP minister cannot negotiate any kind of a settlement. He is boxed in.

Quote here, May 13, Judge Darla Hunter, the *Leader-Post*. *Leader-Post*, Darla Hunter, Judge Hunter, May 13:

It would appear that (Saskatchewan Crop Insurance) has put the cart before the horse.

If the Crown and agents of the Crown undertake costly system changes before effecting the necessary . . . changes, they cannot defeat the rights of individuals affected by their conduct on the basis of costs which the Crown, or its agents, have voluntarily incurred.

So the judge starts to talk about the impropriety of what the NDP Agriculture minister has done. And lawyers have talked about it. So it becomes more and more and more difficult for that man to communicate with the critic over here. He's got no place to go. He has no flexibility. It's impossible for him to open up discussions because he's boxed himself into a legal black hole.

June 15, and here's part of the whole, Mr. Speaker. *Star-Phoenix*:

The issue is compounded by the fact the government intends to use its (GRIP) legislation as a defence in court. (There's the rub.) It will argue it did not break its contract, because the bill says it didn't. In effect, the government is changing the facts in the case.

Well, Mr. Speaker, there's the basis for the whole amendment. There's the basis. Because in fact they broke the law, retroactively tampered with evidence, tried to rewrite history. They have no choice but to bring in law that protects them, then bring in closure that passes it so we can't remind everybody about it, therefore there's no room to negotiate between that minister and any critic over here.

That's the fact. That's the truth. Those are the circumstances. In effect the government is changing the facts in the case — NDP tactics. Change the evidence,

change the facts, tamper with the evidence.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, how do you come over and negotiate and talk to people reasonably when you say, I'm going to change the facts? I'm going to tamper with the evidence. You didn't exist since January. And what's more, if you think you did, I'm going to take away all your rights and then you can't sue me.

How in the world do you communicate? Well no wonder the place has a poisoned atmosphere. I mean, you can win the election. You can go make changes. You can do it. But at least you could defend people's rights, whether they're union contracts, teachers' contracts, seniors, pensioners, farmers. You don't have to get into this.

The editorial says, "In effect, the government is changing the facts in the case." Well who can defend that? You can't campaign on that. You can't defend it. And what's the higher cause — \$23 million? Put you above the law. Rewrite history.

I mean some of the worst dictators in the world, in Europe and the Pacific Rim, said, we'll just rewrite history. It wasn't that way. It wasn't that way. The holocaust didn't happen. We'll rewrite it.

Come on! You can't rewrite history. People of Saskatchewan are sophisticated. People in Canada and in the British parliamentary system have known democratic rights since the Magna Carta. You can't just say, you didn't exist.

So if the editorial gives you a good reason, Mr. Speaker, why the NDP Agriculture critic and the House Leader had no room to negotiate, that's why this amendment's here. They knew there was no point even coming to the conversation.

It's just like the committee rules — no place to negotiate. We'll just do it anyway. Just unilaterally do it. They knew from the outset that was going to be the case.

And here's one where he's even implicated his deputy minister. This is a quote, *Leader-Post*, April 30, 1992, and it just digs . . . he brings in his officials. He brings in the agents. He implicates people he's fired, his advisory committee. They're all implicated.

So when he gets to negotiating, he's got himself a serious problem. Quote: A court affidavit filed earlier in the day from the deputy Agriculture minister Stuart Kramer suggested the NDP is about to introduce legislation to retroactively force farmers to accept changes to GRIP.

Kramer's affidavit, a response to a lawsuit filed against the government in a Melville court room, stated Wiens intends to introduce legislative amendments in which notice of the 1992 changes will be deemed to have been given to producers by March 15, 1992 as required in their individual contracts. End of quote.

So he brings in and implicates the deputy minister of Agriculture who on the stand has to tell the truth, and he says, I'll tell you what the minister's up to. The minister is going to bring in legislation that is going to tamper with

the evidence and either deemed that your contract didn't exist, or that we've sent it out on time, or something else that really rewrites history in the face of all of this.

And no matter you've got tens of thousands of people signing the contracts, my minister, says the deputy, my minister is going to do this. He is going to do this dirty, ugly deed. And you make the deputy go take the heat and put him on the stand.

That's why this minister doesn't want to get on the stand. That's why he can't communicate and talk to the critics over here. He doesn't want his minister, the officials, the agents, the advisory committee, or farmers, or anybody else being forced to be on the stand and tell it as it really was and is.

Because it would change his tune. He'd have to come clean. He'd have to say: we did it wrong; we broke the law; we didn't honour contracts; that a good old Saskatchewan-Canadian tradition, where you shake hands with your neighbour and you say a deal's a deal, means nothing to this minister. We'll get around it.

How do you get around it with your neighbours when you shake hands with them and say, well a deal's a deal? I'll give you so much for this truck and you give me so much for these pigs. What do you do? Do you run out and break the contracts? Do you go and hide in the legislature and say, we'll get around it somehow?

What an attitude. This hand-picked Minister of Agriculture by the NDP Premier is the person that has got his deputy minister within months saying, well actually they're going to tamper with the evidence and bring in legislation to say they did it right anyway. Unbelievable. And we've got tens of thousands of families and communities at stake because we're looking at millions of dollars in communities. And that's what it's about.

For what? For what? Why are you into this? What do you stick up for them for? Why don't you say, hey, young fella, you made a mistake; now just let's go negotiate something better and cleaner.

What a mess you got us into. You're a rookie, I understand that, but rookies can be pulled back; they can be reined in. You don't let them dig you into this. You end up in the constitutional battle of your life, political battle of your life. Unparliamentary, undemocratic, illegal, immoral, and you're ashamed of it. Nobody can defend it. The Attorney General in your own party won't even stand and talk about it. NDP Premier ducks the question. Great bunch. Then he brings in the deputy minister to take the heat.

Here's a quote . . . well there's a lot of them, but the *Leader-Post*, June 13:

The facts be known, the Tories are right on. The NDP government is dead wrong.

Tories are right and the NDP government is dead wrong. Everybody knows that but the NDP. They know it. In fact, they do know it. And if you look how they designed the Bill, Mr. Speaker, there are no reason that no wonder

there was no negotiations. They've got that front of it full of whereas's, you'd think it was a constitutional negotiation going on. Whereas, whereas, whereas, whereas, whereas, down through. And they set that up because they think they're going to be sued 15 days from Friday.

And then it gets in and says, but everything after January didn't happen. And then it goes on and really rips them and says, but you can't sue us because we're above the law.

And then the editorials come out:

The facts be known, the Tories are right on. The NDP government is dead wrong.

Well here is the NDP's hand-picked Agriculture minister who's dead wrong and he's too ornery to figure it out. And for whatever reason is in the back of all of your minds, you're going to ride right with them into this hole, this black hole of all these unconstitutional, illegal, undemocratic changes. For what? Because you're so arrogant, so much pride that you can't admit that you've made a mistake.

Just admit you've made a mistake. Just go out and negotiate. Here we have this amendment. We have closure in this legislature because you can't sit and talk with the Ag critic and discuss, well what would the farmers like? Well they'd like a little more coverage in the event of a crop failure.

They bought some on the contract. You want to change the contract. So negotiate something that's reasonable. Be reasonable. It's so simple, Mr. Speaker.

You know, all the changes that were made here, all of these historic, historic changes because we couldn't have communication between that rookie minister and an Agriculture critic with a very, very small opposition, and you've got yourself into this huge political problem. Absolutely unbelievable. How in the world did it happen? How could it get so we couldn't communicate, couldn't talk about a compromise?

And the quote goes on. This is *Leader-Post*, June 12:

And right now, the Tories' reasons for blocking the government's legislative agenda and effectively holding the province hostage is far more justifiable than the reasons for the NDP's 1989 walkout ever hoped of being.

Now that's interesting, isn't it, Mr. Speaker. The NDP walked out because they didn't want people to buy bonds and shares in SaskEnergy. It was a sinful thing, right? Better not let them invest in SaskEnergy. Wasn't that evil, sinful?

We just did, I think, a Saskatchewan savings bond in Saskatchewan, for \$500 million — copied, the NDP copied our bonds. Great program, I congratulate them. They did it.

Well you could do SaskEnergy bonds, convert them to

shares, and you have equity and less debt. And they walked out of the legislature on this philosophical argument. Imagine, this really big thing, just tremendous — people could actually invest in their own natural gas company. Wouldn't that be unprecedented?

The Speaker: — Order. I was just going to get up anyway. And I want to tell the member that I think the clock has spared him intervention by the Speaker. It now being 12 o'clock, this House stands recessed until 2 p.m. this afternoon.

The Assembly recessed until 2 p.m.