

EVENING SITTING

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. Britton: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to spend a little time on this subamendment, Mr. Speaker. The way I read the subamendment, Mr. Speaker, it has to do with the possibility of the Minister of Agriculture and the Agriculture critic from our side getting together and trying to discuss this Bill and come up with a bit of a consensus. It also, I think, Mr. Speaker, allows me to mention a few words about closure.

Mr. Speaker, the idea of the Agriculture minister and the critic from this side of the House getting together, I believe makes eminent sense. Possibly had we done . . . went this route earlier on, Mr. Speaker, we wouldn't be in the position tonight of trying to convince the government to change their mind after they had more or less got their mind set.

Mr. Speaker, I have said before that I have never felt it too hard to admit to an error and then try to do something about it. And I think in this case, Mr. Speaker, there has been a very grave error made in the process. The error, I think, was made in the process, and in the process the use of closure was used in this Bill before the House.

Possibly, Mr. Speaker, had the member from Morse and the Agriculture minister taken that little bit of a train trip that the member from Thunder Creek mentioned in a jocular manner, I would say they probably could've come back with a consensus.

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to you, sir, and to the members opposite that that could be expanded to a committee of maybe four people even. And the people that talk about this would be people who are knowledgeable about the subject. The minister, of course, I think we have to agree is knowledgeable. The member from Morse, Mr. Speaker, on a practical level I think is eminently qualified to take on a job like this.

Then, Mr. Speaker, had that been done earlier, we wouldn't have had the unilaterally use of closure which in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, is unfair. In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, it's unfair. And I know that my opinion is shared by many of the members opposite. Because when you look back, Mr. Speaker, when closure was first used — at least the first time I saw it used in my short career here in this building — there was a lot of opposition to it. And I think possibly we went into that with some misgivings ourself, from the government side of the House.

So I'm sure that, Mr. Speaker, over there there are some misgivings about what they perceived is the need to use closure. I'm not going to suggest, Mr. Speaker, that we, when we were government, didn't have some misgivings. And when you look at the remarks made by people in 1989, the members opposite — and I have to think that they were sincere — they did not like the use of closure. And, Mr. Speaker, I don't like the use of closure either because, Mr. Speaker, in the words of a member who was on the other side of the House at the time this took place, regardless of what other people may have said in this debate, regardless of the length of time other people have used in this debate, Mr. Speaker, I believe that as the member for Wilkie I have the right and should have the right to speak for my members. Even, Mr. Speaker, even to the point where it may, in your opinion, sometime sound repetitious.

Mr. Speaker, I have, and I am sure every member has, had phone calls. I've had phone calls, another one today, Mr. Speaker, from one of my constituents, and he's telling me, Mr. Speaker, that I am doing the right thing . . . (inaudible) . . . Now, Mr. Speaker, I would not be doing my job if I was to do like the member from Saskatoon Broadview telling me that I should be quiet.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm being insulted from the other side of the House, and let me say to you, sir, I would rather be insulted than be ignored. So do your best over there.

I have no problem standing up here and speaking for my constituents, Mr. Speaker. And when they talk about us not having the right to speak, that we should be quiet because in the election we were defeated, Mr. Speaker, I wonder would that have been the same attitude if that had been done after the 1986 election.

Mr. Speaker, we sit on the government side of the House and listen to day after day after day of what we, at the time, considered stalling tactics, Mr. Speaker. And with respect to you, sir, I know that you were in the House at the time and you know very well what I'm talking about. We did not shut the members up, Mr. Speaker. I can show you and I can read to you quotes from the members, and I, as I said, Mr. Speaker, I have to believe, I have to believe that they were sincere when they made those remarks, just as I hope you will agree with me, sir, that I am sincere when I make the remarks I'm making tonight. I don't feel I could sit in my seat and not have my day in the House to say what I think my constituents have been telling me.

Mr. Speaker, this subamendment where we are suggesting that the Agriculture minister and the Ag critic from this side get together, I think we brought that forward because the first amendment we brought forward, Mr. Speaker, was not well received on the other side because it was suggested that the House leaders . . . I can accept that argument. I can accept the argument from the other side that possibly the House leaders were not the best choice. And I don't say that in a derogatory manner, Mr. Speaker. I say that because the House leaders, the House leaders have a job to keep the House moving, and in all fairness to them, Mr. Speaker, they do have times when they don't agree, maybe, and where their aims and goals

are different, whereas in this other proposal that we're making, where the Agriculture minister and the Ag critic should be both on a level plane because they both have the same, and I'm sure the same, hopes of reconciling this impasse that we're at. And so I say that possibly, possibly this is the better choice, and again I want to say, not in any way being derogatory to the respective House leaders.

The House leaders, I believe, would be qualified to talk about House procedure. Fine. We're talking about an agricultural problem here and it seems to me to make eminent sense to strike a committee, if you will. Mr. Speaker, I could enlarge on that and suggest to you, sir, and to the members opposite: what would be wrong with that, those two people or four people doing exactly what we're doing with the commission?

We have formed a committee. There has been some money found to send those out listening to the folks. We could have some meetings. These people could go around and talk to the farmers, come back with a consensus. It makes eminent sense to me, sir, to shelve this whole thing for one or two weeks, have those people go and get out together, talk about it, come back with a consensus. I believe we this time should . . . I think the members opposite should maybe listen to this proposal.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, I don't think the members opposite really agree with closure, no more than we do. Mr. Speaker, who were the people, who were the people who were always saying, let's debate, let's debate. Debate this; we'll debate that. Mr. Speaker, if there are a group of people who likes to debate, I say it's the socialists — the socialists and the radicals, Mr. Speaker. They always want to talk and talk and talk.

And yet those are the same people who are today suggesting that we don't have that same right, that we would not have the right to debate, that we must keep quiet simply because we lost the last election.

Well, Mr. Speaker, if you was to use that logic then we wouldn't even have to come down here. Then you would just have the government people sitting here. They could do whatever they like. And the people we represent by the unfortunate . . . in that case, unfortunate that they elected an opposition member.

Well then I begin to wonder then, if you carry that to its logical conclusion, then where does democracy come in here? The idea, the idea of a government and an opposition is to be sure that the minority is heard.

Mr. Speaker, I want to point out another thing that I think should be brought out, and that is the committee that brought the first Bill in was not unanimous. The decision was not unanimous. And we've had the Minister of Agriculture suggest that it was an all-party or an all-committee agreement. Mr. Speaker, that's not so. There was a minority report.

And the people that were in the minority didn't want their names mentioned, but I would suggest to the minister and to all the members opposite, that person will have to be identified when this ultimately goes to the courts.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture seems to want to refuse to meet with the opposition critic. And if you want to think about it a little, on going back to the committee, why wouldn't it not have been logical to ask the member from Morse to sit on that committee. Now regardless of whether the first Bill was good or bad, that member was part of the people that put it together. He would be eminently qualified to talk about it, and indeed, Mr. Speaker, he might have been persuaded to change his mind about one or two things.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, after all of the problems we had, I believe we're on the right track with this subamendment. I want to suggest if we were to talk about our right to speak, our right to stand in the House, Mr. Speaker, and I would suggest to you, sir, that if you was to take and compare the words that were spoken when we were in government on the last one or two controversial subjects that was on this floor of their House, how many words were spoken as how many words has been spoken now, I don't think that you'd find an over-preponderance of words on our side.

(1915)

I would suggest to you, sir, and to those over there who would like to have us be quiet, we haven't even started to qualify for the records of words spoken on a controversial subject.

Mr. Speaker, if you took the last five years and compared it to this session, each year, I think we would compare quite favourably. I wonder, Mr. Speaker, where that idea would have gone when we were in government had we suggested that because you were defeated, no one had the right to speak. Mr. Speaker, the member from Turtleford was saying something about a letter someone wrote and that we should be just locked out. Well that's a little bit . . . I hope the member had his tongue in his cheek when he said that, because I don't think he really believes that that's the way this House should run.

I wonder what would happen if we'd have said something like that or tried to do something like that when we were in government, Mr. Speaker. There's only one or two reasons that a person would make a statement like that, I think, and that is that either the NDP (New Democratic Party) would like absolute and complete control or that they know right now that they're on some very thin ice when it comes to the constitutionality of the Bill.

Or maybe, maybe, Mr. Speaker, it's frustration breaking out because they maybe thought that they could slip this through without a fight. Now, Mr. Speaker, I can relate to the last part, the frustration. I sat over on the other side and listened to 13 hours of not the most interesting kind of a debate so I know the frustrations build. But I say to you, sir, and I say to those, had we gone to, had they listened to, some of the proposals we put forward, in all likelihood this could have been settled and we could have all been home enjoying what was left of the summer, and I sincerely believe that.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to wonder out loud to the Minister of Agriculture, now maybe one of the things they could discuss if they had this committee or this meeting,

Mr. Speaker, as the subamendment suggests, now what happens . . . now what happens to the contracts that are now null and void? Maybe a couple of questions. If those contracts are wiped out, they're null and void, are the premiums going to be refunded? Or are the farmers going to have to pay back the payments that they've received under the . . . These things have to be talked about. Because I think there's some very serious consequences here. Those are the things, Mr. Speaker, I believe, a meeting of the minds, if you will, could accomplish.

I want to quote a few of the members. And, Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to try to pick and make anyone over there feel bad. But I do want to remind some of the members what they said when they were in the situation that we are in.

The member from Prince Albert Carlton who, once in a while, when he feels he needs to speak, speaks, and I have to suggest, fairly well — and here's what he said:

What can we say about closure, Mr. Speaker, and closure, or in this case it's a matter of closure on closure. Sitting back and listening to a lot of the arguments that have been presented, and listening carefully and knowing very well that this is the first time that closure has ever been proposed in this legislature and ever used in the legislature, I can say that to me it smacks somewhat of totalitarianism.

(Now, Mr. Speaker) I feel that closure is somewhat of an affront to democracy. (And) I think and I believe that it is the antithesis of democracy — the exact opposite — because what it does is it stifles debate as opposed to what the democratic principle is of encouraging debate.

If democracy, Mr. Speaker, if democracy implies making decisions that reflect the public good and the public mood, then this motion of closure is definitely an affront to it, because closure offends the democratic principle of free speech. I find it very distasteful; I find it a bitter pill to swallow, because it doesn't solve an issue, it smothers it. And that's not democratic.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the member was sincere and I have to agree with the part where he says, ". . . it doesn't solve an issue . . ."

Mr. Speaker, I could suggest to the members opposite if they was to go and look and find out the progress we have made in this House when we were not under the threat of closure and the progress that we have made after it was apparent to us that we were being throttled or jammed, I can say to you, sir, we have not saved any time by this method.

An Hon. Member: — Herman, he looks like a Rolfes with hair.

Mr. Britton: — Mr. Speaker, I . . .

An Hon. Member: — He looks like a Rolfes with hair.

An Hon. Member: — Oh, far more handsome.

An Hon. Member: — Better looking.

An Hon. Member: — Your wife must be awfully pretty to make up for that.

Mr. Britton: — Mr. Speaker, I have to concur with some of the off-the-cuff remarks that are going around here, sir. And I also say that with respect.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to suggest . . . I'd like to read what another member has said. Now this member . . . As a matter of fact, I think you and I have the same barber, Mr. Speaker. We have the same kind of a hair-do. And we go for the best. I agree with that too.

The member from Humboldt, who in the opposition side spoke most of the time on agricultural subjects, he was probably the only member over there, Mr. Speaker, that did have a grass roots feeling for agriculture. Now I'm not going to stand here, Mr. Speaker, and pretend that the member from Humboldt always was in agreeance with myself or I with him. But I have to, I have to accept the sincerity of the person, because when he was in opposition he took up the challenge on the closure issue. And here's what he said, and I quote him:

Mr. Speaker, we are in this debate because this government, I believe, is drunk with power.

As well, he goes on to say:

They are so consumed with themselves, so consumed with their friends, and so consumed by the power that they wield, that they just refuse to allow the democratic process to work.

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if we aren't in this same situation now, where the hon. member from Rosetown will not agree to at least discuss some of the suggestions we have made. Mr. Speaker, I am not so naïve to suggest to you or anyone else, sir, that all of the suggestions that we have made should have been agreed with, but surely, surely when we have people on this side of the House that have spent their whole life in agriculture, surely they would have some reasonable input to a meeting of the minister and the member from Morse. I think it would be ideal on one side, and I want to be careful how I say this because I don't want to seem to be casting any aspersions to other . . .

Here we have, on this side, a member who has been in politics for some little while. He knows the political side of the story. He's been all of his life in agriculture. His agriculture is diversified. He's in cattle; he's in dry-land farming; he's in irrigation. And on the other hand, the Agriculture minister, as I understand it, was in hogs and dry-land farming. And in conversation with the minister, Mr. Speaker, he's expressed to me . . . Mr. Speaker, he has expressed to me the difficulties that he has had farming. He has been in land that is less than the best. He explained to me that he inherited down through the family. And he also expressed to me, Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: — Why is the member on her feet?

Ms. Lorje: — Because, Mr. Speaker, I'm finding it difficult to relate what the member opposite is saying to the subamendment at hand and I'm wondering if you could give a ruling on that.

The Speaker: — Well, the member is attempting to relate the farming experience of the minister to the subamendment and that because of all of his experience in farming that he would be an excellent person to start the negotiations with the member from Morse. And I think I will find him in order.

An Hon. Member: — I'm not surprised. It's not surprising she wouldn't understand that.

The Speaker: — Order.

Mr. Britton: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the ruling. And indeed, indeed what I think what I was trying to suggest that they . . . not only is the experience there, as the member from Thunder Creek pointed out, there was something like 75 years of actual experience.

Mr. Speaker, there's a vast area that they would be knowledgeable about. And that is why I say, Mr. Speaker, I suggest that this subamendment is an excellent suggestion to the members.

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to go on, Mr. Speaker, and quote again because I believe the member from Humboldt was sincere when he said these words in 1989. He said:

They simply do not respond to democracy in a traditional way in this province because they are so drunk with the power that they hold.

And he goes on to say:

It sets that arrogant attitude, and let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, I think the reason they're doing this is because every time they do it it becomes easier.

Mr. Speaker, I concur with the remarks made by the member from Humboldt in this particular case, because as we saw, we are guilty when we were government, of bringing in closure. And to me that was the first time. It may have happened before, but . . . And we are guilty of that.

I suggest to you, sir, and to the others over there that it was a little different situation. And I am prejudiced, I agree. However, as we saw in this session, we are only something in the day 60-some. Mr. Speaker, we were 120 days before we invoked closure and, as the member from Humboldt says, and I quote him again: the next time it will be easier. Well it is becoming easier and easier and easier as we go along.

Mr. Speaker, every time the opposition gets frustrated a little bit, they bring in closure and I don't think that's what that option was there for. I believe that option was there only if nothing else could be done. The member from Humboldt is right when he says it can get easier and easier. And that is again why I say the subamendment, where we are asking the government side of the House to

consider a meeting of the member responsible for Agriculture and our critic . . .

Mr. Speaker, I suggest a committee like that out on the road today because the farmers are phoning in, particularly those farmers who are now in the drought area because the coverage is not that well. They're getting very concerned. They would be receptive, I believe, to meetings held by these people and we could certainly come back with a very concrete message from the Minister of Agriculture and the critic.

(1930)

The other thing I wanted to point out before I forget, Mr. Speaker, is — and I want to point this out to the Minister of Agriculture — is the position he's putting members of that committee that he talks about in, when they have said they don't want to be identified. If this continues the way it's going, Mr. Minister, I'm saying to you they will have to be identified. They will have to stand in court and be identified and they will have to, under oath, agree and admit what they told you, sir, when they first told you you were in trouble with this Bill. And I think you should think about that a little before you dig your heels in too deep. Because you said, we'll get around it somehow.

I think, Mr. Minister, in all fairness, you were only thinking of your own hide at the time and I don't think you really considered what you were doing to those people who worked with you and for you with sincerity. And it said here, essentially he — and it says Wiens — don't seem concerned, said the committee member who asked not to be identified. He thought we could get around that legal question. He said he would get around it somehow.

Mr. Speaker, the member is telling you that you have a legal question and you say you can get around a legal question. Now that is putting that member in a very difficult position. I look at an affidavit made by one Kramer who says in his affidavit the minister is going to go back and make retroactive legislation to make it legal.

In the Bill, Mr. Speaker, there is no retroactive provision there to make it deem that the members got a letter. The contract is null and void. There is no contract, never was a contract.

Somebody is on the hook here, Mr. Minister. And in all fairness to you, sir, and to those people who helped you, I think you should think quite deeply before you allow this to go very much further.

Mr. Speaker, I want to quote again from *Hansard* in 1989. This is from member from Churchill Downs and the member from Churchill Downs takes a prominent role in both as opposition and now in government. I have to believe that when he said these words he meant them.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to take part in what I think is a historical debate, the first time closure has ever been invoked in this province. And I sincerely hope it'll be the last time closure is ever invoked in this province.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the member probably believed

that. However, his actions today makes it a little difficult for me to believe that he really did believe that and even if I want to. He goes on to say,

Mr. Speaker, it is undoubtedly another factor — I wished it were not so — undoubtedly another factor is simply the desire of members opposite to enjoy their summer.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we've heard some talk about people that didn't get holidays. Mr. Speaker, is this why closure is being invoked time after time? Just to go out and get holidays?

Mr. Speaker, I went to the door of the people in the Wilke constituency and asked for a job. When I asked for that job, Mr. Speaker, I didn't tell them I didn't want to work summers. I didn't tell them I didn't want to work at night. I told them I wanted the job and I got the job.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have the member from Churchill Downs seems to be concerned about his holidays. Well, Mr. Speaker, as I have been looking the last few days over the benches on the other side, there must be quite a few of them having holidays because their attendance is certainly down. And I want to go on to repeat, quote what the member from Churchill Downs also said:

They don't want to be here, Mr. Speaker, because they don't want to face the music.

The member from Elrose-Rosetown said he's going to be here. I'll appreciate that. I would also appreciate if you would take into consideration some of the suggestions we're making to you.

They don't want to be here, Mr. Speaker, because they don't want to face the music. They don't want to admit and they don't want to be reminded that the public don't want this. They are acting contrary to public opinion and they're being arrogant, insensitive, and undemocratic.

That's the quote. Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you today the same thing is there. They don't want to face the music because we are getting phone calls telling us that public opinion is not on their side. This amendment may alleviate that a little bit. If we could show the people out there that we are really and truly trying to reach an agreement on this subject, I'm sure that the people out in the countryside would agree with this, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I want to bring your attention to another couple of things. I mentioned the fact that the committee member who did not want to be identified will eventually have to be identified if this process continues. Some of the members told the member, the Agriculture minister, the government . . . They warned him about the deadline and were told it wasn't a problem. Well, Mr. Speaker, again I go back to my question to the Agriculture minister.

Now that the contracts have been declared null and void, closure has been invoked, there has never been a contract because it was null and void. What's going to happen to the premiums? Do they go back to the farmer now because you didn't have a contract? And are the farmers

going to have to refund all the money that they got under the program? Because if we look at the unilateral use of closure to try and make this legal, then we find ourselves in a bit of a spot that I believe has to be reconciled. And I believe a committee, a meeting of the Agriculture minister and our critic, or indeed, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition who is well qualified also, to meet and reconcile some of these questions that are going to have to be, I believe, identified and resolved . . . The place to resolve that, I believe, is right here in the House. Those resolutions should be done right here, Mr. Speaker. And I'm sure that we are prepared to listen to any other proposition from the . . .

I want to quote a couple of things, Mr. Speaker, that indicates that we do have the public opinion on our side. When I quoted from the minister from Churchill Downs, he suggested that you had to have the opinion of the people on your side. And here's a letter from a Mr. Palmer, June 18, 1992. And he said:

I think the farmers had a pretty good deal . . . and then (and he used the name of the Premier) Mr. Romanow turns around and tries to wreck it . . . I think Mr. Devine had every right to walk out.

That indicates to me . . . and I have some others, and I'm not sure just how many of them you would allow me to use, Mr. Speaker, and I won't belabour it. But I want to read another one. It says:

Yes, I agree with them (the PCs). Somebody's got to stop (this government), otherwise they'd pass laws and do whatever they want to.

Mr. Speaker, that points up the problem that we're having with the process that's being used. When they use closure, on one hand, to stop us from talking; and on the other hand, when we make a proposal to the effect that we should get together and get a committee to take it out of the House and take it out of the confrontation that seems to be here, they won't listen to us either. So I don't know. It makes it a little difficult, Mr. Speaker, to understand and believe that those members were sincere.

The member from Moose Jaw Wakamow had a very long speech about how he would stand on his integrity.

An Hon. Member: — What do you say?

Mr. Britton: — What do I think? What did I say? I wasn't in the debate last time . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh yes you can look it up, what I said.

An Hon. Member: — We moved it to the Rules Committee; that's what we did.

Mr. Britton: — That's right. Now I would wonder how your parishioners are going . . . how you're going to face your parishioners when you stand and vote for this after telling the people what your principles were.

An Hon. Member: — What did you say?

Mr. Britton: — I'm not talking about what I said. I'm talking about what you said. I have no problem living up

to anything that I have said. I want you . . . You just live up to what you said. That's all I want you to do.

Mr. Speaker, as I said again, I'm not so sure that I can really and truly believe that they were sincere in 1989. Not at the time. At the time they made those statements, I did believe they were sincere. But now with the performance that's going on now, I have a little difficulty. I have a little difficulty.

Here's another quote if you think that we don't have the public opinion on our side: They — and it says the NDP government — changed the program without doing it by the rules. I signed a contract for four years and they changed the contract. If I wanted to change the contract, I couldn't.

Now, Mr. Speaker, he goes on to say: I'm just livid with anger. I can go on — and I know that there are other people want to make some comments, Mr. Speaker — but I find it very difficult to stand in my place, Mr. Speaker, and feel that there is any sincerity coming from that other side.

When we heard those people stand up in their place and proudly say, I'm a socialist and I'm a radical . . . and they always wanted to talk and debate. And those same people will turn around and tell me that I don't have the right to talk and I shouldn't talk. I should be quiet. Mr. Speaker, does that mean that if you're a free-enterpriser you don't have the right to speak, that only socialists have the right to speak? . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Pardon?

An Hon. Member: — What did you say, though?

Mr. Britton: — What did I say on the debate? You tell me what I said. I can tell you what you said. I'll tell you what you said. You tell me what I said. We took it to the Rules Committee.

Mr. Speaker, I realize I've drifted away a bit and I apologize for that, sir.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, when is closure used unilaterally, I have to believe it was done unfairly. When we used closure, Mr. Speaker, we did it with some misgivings. And I'm sure that the first time that this was brought forward, there may have been some misgivings.

However, I cannot believe that it was any sincerity in their remarks when closure comes and closure comes and closure comes and we're only 60 days into the session — only 60-some-odd days into the session, Mr. Speaker.

That is not unusual circumstance. If you look back into 1987 and some of the other years, we put in many more years . . . many more, many more days.

Mr. Speaker, I've had my say and I think that some of my colleagues are interested in carrying on the debate. And I thank you very much for your tolerance and your patience, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1945)

Mr. Sonntag: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It gives me a great deal of pleasure to speak on this subject for a short while tonight as well.

I want to refer to the motion that we are talking about, that Bill No. 87, An Act respecting amendments to Certain Farm Income Insurance Legislation be now read a second time and the proposed amendment by the Leader of the Opposition that says:

That all the words after the word "That" be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

this Bill not be read a second time because the House leaders have not reached agreement on the principles involved and the process in which it has been brought forward.

Mr. Speaker, and the proposed subamendment moved by the member from Arm River:

That the words "House leaders" be substituted for the words "the Minister of Agriculture and the opposition member responsible for Agriculture" and by deleting all the words after the words "principles involved" and the following substituted therefor:

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

The Speaker: — Order. Before the member proceeds, the member may not be aware, maybe other members are not aware, that in the blues there is an error — the word in the subamendment, because it changes the whole meaning: "That the words "House leaders" be substituted 'with' the words . . ."

Order. I noticed there were some other members today didn't notice it either. Order.

Mr. Sonntag: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Reading through the amendment and the subamendment, Mr. Speaker, it's very clear to me that the members opposite don't know what they're doing either. I tell you, Mr. Speaker, I ask that the members get on with business and that we get to vote.

I've been talking to farmers in my constituency, Mr. Speaker, and they clearly acknowledge that the federal Minister of Agriculture and the federal government are responsible and should be coming through with the third line of defence, and they're not after our provincial government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Sonntag: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday we offered the members opposite two opportunities to speak on the GRIP (gross revenue insurance program) legislation, and they turned it down both times. I would . . .

The Speaker: — Order. I do want to remind the member before he gets any further, he's not on the main motion. He's on the subamendment. And therefore the items in

the subamendment are why the Minister of Agriculture and the opposition critic of Agriculture should be substituted for the House Leaders and the use of closure in this debate. That is what the limitations of debate is in the subamendment.

Mr. Sonntag: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was trying to refer to the fact that closure . . . the motion about closure is what I was leading to, Mr. Speaker.

On that subject, the member opposite from Wilkie as well said about closure just a few minutes ago, that he had no difficulty living up to what he said. And I refer back, Mr. Speaker, to *Hansard*, August 7, '89 where we were talking about closure with respect to the subamendment here.

And he says that:

They keep telling us how bad it's going to be; we're going to lose the next election. Fine, fine — if we do, we will.

Well, Mr. Speaker, they did.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Sonntag: — And further, carrying on, it says:

And (also) I for one, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to support this (closure), because I believe it's right and it's fair and it's the thing to do, and I'll be supporting the motion, Mr. Speaker.

An Hon. Member: — Who said that?

Mr. Sonntag: — The member opposite from Wilkie said that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I'll be very brief in closing. And I just finish off, Mr. Speaker, by asking that we get on to business and argue that what we're dealing with here is not with the GRIP legislation; we're dealing with procedures. And I urge all members to get on with business and get this legislation through.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I hesitated on purpose to get to my feet, Mr. Speaker, because I was hoping that more members from the government side would have the courage of the member from Turtleford and the member from Meadow Lake to get up to address this very, very serious topic that we have before us today.

The members in this House, from time to time I think as debates have gone on, have been reminding each other of various things that we say. And it's something like in the good book, I guess. Here every word that we emit is recorded for posterity, and sometimes we are met with a situation, that — golly, did I really say that? — kind of thing.

But in response to the member from Meadow Lake, Mr.

Speaker, and I don't intend to take too much time in making my points, but in the next couple of hours I would like to bring forward some of the more salient issues that I think have to be dealt with in speaking to this subamendment.

Now the member from Meadow Lake mentions the fact that yesterday they gave us the opportunity twice to get into the GRIP debate. And I would agree with him that that was done at that time. One must not forget that this is a House of debate. That is the essence of democracy and the essence of what this whole place is for. And I think all of us have eloquently, from time to time, expressed our opinions on that.

And in conclusion to that particular statement made by the member from Meadow Lake, I would also like to remind him that yesterday is what this legislature calls private members' day. Private members' day, not government orders, not special orders by the government. The government has four days of the week in which to do government business. The fifth day has always been designated as private members' day, which essentially is the day for the opposition. And I feel very comfortable talking about this topic, Mr. Speaker, simply because it was the member from Meadow Lake that made the comment. And having made that comment, I have the right to respond to it for the member from . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order! I think the member from Rosthern realizes that when the member from Meadow Lake started on that, I immediately called him out of order and that he was not on the subamendment. And I had called the member out of order. So that subject area is not within the purview of the subamendment.

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The other member that had the courage to get up from the government side was the member from Turtleford. And his greatest condemnation during his speech, short as it was, was the fact that the only reason, the only reason that we have the amendment and the subamendment before us today was to extend debate. That was his criticism. That was his chastisement of the opposition, that the only reason that we were coming up with this subamendment was to extend debate.

Precisely, Mr. Speaker, I say, and I say to members opposite, precisely to extend debate for as long as necessary to try to convince you that what you're doing is not right. Like I said before, that is the essence of debate — so that we will have the opportunity to change your mind, if not the way a GRIP stands, then through the amendment that we have put forward and the subamendment which we are specifically addressing at this time.

And for the member from Turtleford to suggest that the proper thing to do to get this legislature working is to boot us out, and that is what he said, boot the opposition out, in reference to the *Star-Phoenix* article, Mr. Speaker, is not what this subamendment is all about. Because the subamendment is the debating that takes place here and us trying to put our best case forward as opposed to the stand that the government is taking. That's why we have the amendment and the subamendment before us.

Now, Mr. Speaker, so that the audience and the members opposite are . . . for those that perhaps that are looking in right now, the subamendment that we are dealing with in particular, that comes from the Hon. Minister of Agriculture's main motion that An Act respecting amendments to Certain Farm Income Insurance Legislation be now read a second time, we as the opposition are saying, no, it's not going to be read a second time and these are the reasons why.

Now we're making the subamendment because we recognize now that our amendment which said that the House leaders, because they have not reached agreement on the principle, and the process in which it has been brought forward, we are now saying that on second thought . . . And, Mr. Speaker, I want to go into that whole scenario of the House leaders and where we fit in and where we do not fit in. And I take some issue with some of the comments made with my colleague . . . from my colleagues here on the role of the House leaders and so on, but I'll get into that momentarily.

The proposed subamendment, "the proposed subamendment moved by Mr. Muirhead," and I'm quoting here, Mr. Speaker, from the blues:

That the words "House leaders" be substituted with the words "the Minister of Agriculture . . ."

The Speaker: — Order, order, order. Order, order. Before the member . . . I don't want that to become a precedent. Just because the names are in the blues, we still don't use those. You use the name of the constituency. That's practice, has been practice for a long time.

Mr. Neudorf: — Of course, Mr. Speaker, and I have no problem with that. I concur with your ruling. I'm sorry.

So the member from Arm River made this:

That the words "House Leaders" be substituted for the words "the Minister of Agriculture and the opposition member responsible for Agriculture" and by deleting all the words after the words "principles involved" and the following substituted therefor:

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

Now there's a lot to that subamendment because it does basically two things. It says, in retrospect, let's have another look at having the House leaders do the negotiating to get the system working because we feel that that has not been able to accomplish its objective, Mr. Speaker. And I want to take some moments to show the Assembly what the House leaders actually did in trying to reach some kind of resolve of the issue that we find facing us this evening.

And I want to take a few moments with that, then I want to go ahead and make the case why the Minister of Agriculture and our own person responsible for Agriculture should get together to resolve the issue. And I think maybe the member from Thunder Creek took it

perhaps a little bit . . . a step too far in suggesting that we use your hat, Mr. Speaker, pass it around and get these two folks on a train to B.C. (British Columbia) so they could hash out the . . . It's an interesting thought. I don't know how practical, Mr. Speaker. But we are trying and we are looking for innovative ways in which to accomplish our objective.

Mr. Speaker, to get on with my other points that I'm going to be trying to make, is first of all the House leaders and the role that they have had. We hear a lot of talk, Mr. Speaker, in the media and amongst ourselves about the negotiating process. What was it really about? Why did it not come to fruition?

I have with me only a sample of negotiating procedures that Mr. House Leader for the government and myself did in terms of our written correspondence. There was a lot here, Mr. Speaker. I have correspondence dating from July 8, and then all the way to August 11. I have left out some of the intervening material in between because of lack of relevancy but I want the viewers to get the gist of the kinds of things that we were trying to accomplish. And certainly because in that intervening time some of the correspondence was dealing very heavily with other matters.

The first letter that I have is a letter from myself that I wrote to the Government House Leader on July 8.

(2000)

Now, Mr. Speaker, I only have one letter of this nature but I have to set out the tenor of what we were working under and perhaps the duress that we were working under in trying, Mr. Speaker, to establish the situation where, as the subamendment mentions, closure has become necessary. Closure has become necessary.

Not only that, but as a subamendment also makes the point of unilateral rule changes, unilateral force by government members to force their way. That's what this subamendment is talking about. And I'm going to take some moments to, for the record, enter some of the correspondence. And I say to the Government House Leader:

Further to our discussions last night, I would like to first outline to you my perception of the current process to now and then provide you with some options as agreed.

Mr. Speaker, we were looking at options at that time, how to get out of the process where we were zeroing in on a confrontational course where we would have to have closure being used. Unilateral decisions made. And I continue:

I cannot and do not hold the government responsible for the Speaker's unprecedented decision to order the Special Rules Committee to convene immediately and come to a hurried conclusion regarding bell-ringing rules.

However, I do submit that the failure of the committee to come to a consensus weighs heavily

on the shoulders of government members.

Therefore, it is incumbent on us as House leaders to act to prevent the threatened precipitous action intervention by Mr. Speaker.

Any unilateral interference in favour of the government will only serve to bring the institution to the edge of chaos and further degrade our Assembly's public standing.

That was a concern, Mr. Speaker, that I had at that time already. And much of that, in subsequent events, have come to fruition.

As you know (I continue) from long experience, if there is not co-operation on all sides, after a time it no longer matters what the cause or who may be the blame-casters, it is the entire legislature that suffers.

This is part of the letter that I wrote to the Government House Leader as long ago as July 8, where in anticipation of this scenario I was already making pleas that we come to some form of resolution.

Now I continue on:

After receiving the Speaker's order I publicly stated that the opening position of the opposition would be to seek a six-month hoist (a six-month hoist).

That simply means, Mr. Speaker, that we as a government then would say if an undesirable Bill comes forward that we cannot live with — that the people cannot live with — we will be asking the government to suspend or hoist or shelve that Bill for six months so that during that period of time, the government and the opposition can go out and find out really what the consensus of the people is on that particular piece of legislation, either through public hearings, preferably, or other means at our disposal.

That is the proposition that I made, Mr. Speaker.

And if I can continue:

I publicly acknowledge that movement in these positions should be understood to be a given. Yet the member from Prince Albert Northcote almost immediately introduced a motion to provide for a three-day hoist, a three-day hoist, not a six-month hoist. There was no consideration by the government members of any other options. We did try to explore the proposal for a public-hearing phase and we did discuss variations on the time of suspension. But there was absolutely (absolutely) no response from government members.

Mr. Speaker, I'm still quoting from the letter that I sent to the government member trying to give a synopsis of the events that led to our conclusion, maybe, just maybe, government House leaders were not the proper people to deal from this because of the political perspective, as the member from Thunder Creek pointed out.

At one point, the member from Prince Albert Northcote stated that the opposition had not initiated any moves for a compromise, thus clearly indicating that he was aware that his own three-day proposal was unreasonable. I immediately put it to him that he should then indicate what he thought was a reasonable compromise — 60 days, 45 days, what? — to which there was no response from any government member.

I have learned since you introduced the motion currently under debate that the member from Churchill Downs has indicated to certain members of the media that had the opposition simply proposed an amendment to increase the hoist from 3 to 60 days, that the government might well have agreed and that a resolution would have been had.

Now I make that statement, Mr. Speaker, because that was what I was told in good faith by members of the media, that that is exactly what the member from Churchill Downs had said. But subsequent to this in a future letter, we'll see how the government members have reacted to that. I continue:

I suggest that the post-facto explanation is a bit artful and I do question the sincerity of those statements. However, in accord with my promise to notify you of options before the House opens today and in a sincere attempt to stave off the precedent of unilateral rules of the House by the executive, I will therefore . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Why is the member on his feet?

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Speaker, on a point of order with respect to relevancy here. I believe if the member wants to get off of this particular subamendment and debate something that happened in Rules Committee, we'd be quite willing to go ahead and vote this off at this time. And otherwise, I would suggest that perhaps he might get his remarks more attuned to this very, very narrow motion . . . amendment . . . subamendment that his colleague asked us to debate. If he wants to get on to something else, we're quite willing to vote this off immediately.

The Speaker: — Yes, what's your point of order?

Mr. Neudorf: — I don't have a point of order, but I would like to respond to the member's point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — If you have no point of order . . .

Mr. Neudorf: — Well I'm responding to his point of order. I have the right to speak to a point of order, do I not?

The Speaker: — Not necessarily. Speakers have from time to time said, no, he doesn't need any more. I just want to make that clear. That doesn't mean I'm not going to let you, but that's the Speaker's prerogative. I just want to make that very clear. But I will let the member speak to it.

Mr. Neudorf: — Well I appreciate your indulgence, Mr. Speaker. I would respond to the member. If he has been listening carefully, I have been very, very precise about what I've been doing and why I am doing it.

The subamendment says it shall not be the House leaders, it shall be the Minister of Agriculture and our member from the opposition dealing with agriculture. Now how more precise can I be as to give explanation for people and to the Assembly why it should not be the House leaders?

I have told you I am going to go through scenarios why the House leaders failed and I intend to do the same with why it should be those folks.

The Speaker: — Order. It is very difficult to separate those two. I have been following the member very carefully, but I think the member is getting in too much detail. I would suggest to the member that he would have a real good argument of relevancy if he was on the amendment.

An Hon. Member: — That's what I am on.

The Speaker: — No, we're on the subamendment. We are on the subamendment. Your words would be very relevant to the amendment, but not to the subamendment. If the member goes into too much detail, he will be out of order on the subamendment.

The subamendment simply says that the Minister of Agriculture and the opposition member should start negotiating. That's what it says. And the second part of it is that because closure was used unilaterally.

Those are the two things: arguing why it should be the Minister of Agriculture and the critic for Agriculture in opposition. That's what the subamendment says. And the second part of it is the closure. So it's a very narrow subamendment.

And I had ruled earlier today that to relate it briefly to the argument as to why it should not be the House leaders would be acceptable, but not in the detail I think that the member is going into at this time. If he were speaking to the amendment, I think he would be in . . . certainly would be relevant and in order.

However, I will allow the member to continue and I hope he takes into consideration what I have said.

Mr. Neudorf: — Mr. Speaker, thank you for that consideration.

I have a number of letters here that I have sent to the Government House Leader and he has responded to me. And that process is what I was trying to outline because I know that there's a lot of interest in this. Why has this broken down? The people are asking us; I'm sure the people are asking you, Mr. Speaker. I don't want to involve you in the discussion here, but they're asking members of this legislature, why are we in the mess that we are in? And what I'm trying to do here is lay it out.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate your ruling about not

getting into detail. But for a point of clarification, what if I just simply read the documents without . . . I know also that you can't have an extended speech that quotes. I was trying to avoid that by making comments as I went along. But if it facilitates the matter, I'll quickly read it into the record that way.

The Speaker: — Order. I don't want to get into debate. All I'm saying to the member is, in general terms, if he wishes to relate as to why the House leaders were not successful and therefore we need to now ask the Agriculture minister and the critic of Agriculture to take over negotiations, that is fine. I've ruled that in order before. And the second part of it is simply the closure. And I ask the member to continue in that line please.

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've put away all the letters that I was going to do to set the scenario except those dated August 10 and August 11 and I'll read those into the record with your permission, sir, and I'll let the people make up their minds.

On August 10, Mr. Speaker, on August 10 I write to the . . . No, I'm wrong. On August 10, Government House Leader initiated on August 10 and he wrote me this letter. And he said:

I write today to offer the following proposal for the transaction of legislative business for the balance of the week. Government members have indicated their willingness to forego private members' business on Tuesday, provide members of your caucus with an additional 10 hours of debate on the second reading of The Farm Income Insurance Legislation Amendment Act.

In addition, the government is prepared to call this same Bill for further debate on Wednesday and Thursday, if it is felt that the opposition requires this additional debating time. This schedule would provide over 30 hours of debate for this particular stage of the Bill. This is in addition to the two months of public debate since the government first gave notice of its intention to introduce the legislation on June 9.

Further, if second reading of The Farm Income Insurance Legislation Amendment Act is concluded as per the above schedule, the government is prepared to call the estimates for the Department of Agriculture on Friday of this week.

If you are prepared to put forward an alternate schedule which would see the completion of second reading by Thursday or Friday of this week, I would be interested in discussing with you.

I look forward to your early response.

And that's from the Government House Leader to myself.

On the surface it appears as if it's a lot of generosity involved, Mr. Speaker; however, as my other colleagues have pointed out to the House, that when you start going

back to 1989 on this very same thing, we are talking about 120-some days of debate before closure was brought forward. Here we are on day 64, with a lot of other stuff going on before you people decided to go for closure — half the time. So let's put that on the table at the same time.

(2015)

Mr. Speaker, in response to the Government House Leader, I did not respond to him directly because I felt that a way out of the impasse was not through, necessarily, the Government Leader, House Leader, and certainly not to the Minister of Agriculture, but rather a person that could resolve the impasse in this Legislative Assembly without the use of closure, without unilateral changes being made. And so I wrote a letter that same day, after I got that, to the Hon. Attorney General. And I say to the Attorney General of Saskatchewan:

In response to your House Leader's letter of today's date, I would suggest a far more democratic, legal, and non-partisan approach be taken with respect to your government's attempt to implement the GRIP legislation. Supporting our initial suspicions, we have obtained legal opinion that this legislation would not withstand a challenge under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

As such, we request that you immediately refer this Bill to the Court of Appeal under The Constitutional Questions Act, for a ruling regarding its constitutionality. As you know, The Representations Act of '89 was referred to and reviewed quickly by the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court of Canada.

While the Bill is being examined, regular legislative business can continue. I am sure you will agree that this is a responsible and fair approach to a Bill which deeply affects individual rights and the livelihood of thousands of Saskatchewan people.

I await your earliest response.

This was my letter, in response to the Government House Leader's letter, to the Attorney General of the province of Saskatchewan. That, Mr. Speaker, to us, was a very reasonable way of getting away from closure, of getting away from the government making unilateral rule changes. Well the same day, I did get a response from the Government House Leader. And in his response it says:

In response to your letter of this afternoon to the Attorney General, let me say first I was disappointed that you did not respond to the reasonable schedule for debate contained in my correspondence of earlier today. The government has reviewed this matter with legal advisors, both inside and outside the Department of Justice, and we are confident that the proposed legislation would withstand any challenge under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Given this situation, I would respectfully request that you reconsider the rather generous proposal advanced earlier today wherein debate on the second reading of the legislation would be given priority on private members' day, as well as on Wednesday and Thursday. This schedule will provide in excess of 30 hours of debate for members of your caucus in addition to the two months of public debate since notice of this legislation was first given.

I await your reply.

In other words, Mr. Speaker, a complete rejection of the offer that the opposition caucus made.

And then I get into August 11, yesterday, Mr. Speaker, and a series of letters because I did not reply on the 10th to the Government House Leader, but I did reply on August 11. And my letter to the Government House Leader simply was this:

Further to our discussion last night, I would like to detail our proposal to allow the passage of The Farm Income Insurance Legislation Amendment Act and an early end to the current session.

As per my recent letter to the Honourable . . . Attorney General, we believe that your GRIP legislation would not survive an inevitable constitutional challenge. It would seem prudent and impartial to have the Attorney General refer the Bill to the Court of Appeal under The Constitutional Questions Act for a ruling regarding its constitutionality. Again, I remind you that the former administration referred The Representations Act to the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court of Canada for a review in 1989.

As was discussed, the Opposition Caucus would then be prepared to allow the passage of the Bill with an amendment to the "coming into force provision" which states that The Farm Income Insurance Legislation Amendment Act would not come into force until its constitutionality is confirmed.

In other words, what I was saying, Mr. Speaker, to the Government House Leader is, you make that proviso, make that House amendment on that Bill that it will not come into force until the Supreme Court or the Appeal Court of Saskatchewan has confirmed its constitutionality — you make that commitment — and bang, Mr. Speaker, we would still try to get some amendments through during the normal course of debate, but it would be gone. And we could then, literally, lickety-split get the business of the House moving.

Now I continue on, Mr. Speaker, with a couple of short paragraphs, and I quote again:

If you believe the Premier (I'm quoting from a letter here) . . . observations that the rights of individuals must not be suppressed, then you must recognize this proposal as reasonable and democratic.

It would seem that this proposal would be greeted as a major breakthrough in the current impasse and would be a significant step toward a speedy conclusion to this session.

I trust that you have taken this matter to your caucus colleagues and hope to hear from you at your earliest opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, I'll forego the one letter . . . this is the response from the Government House Leader — this is the last one — August 11, yesterday again, and he states that:

I have reviewed your correspondence of earlier this day and will again express my disappointment over your failure to consider the offer made both yesterday and today by the government. The government has offered your caucus a very reasonable schedule for the consideration of this Bill and we sincerely expected a response that would have addressed this issue.

Unfortunately, you seem determined to continue the practice of the past few months. I respectfully request that you reconsider our generous proposal which will provide ample time for opposition members to debate this legislation.

That, Mr. Speaker, in essence, is the latter part of the negotiations that we tried to bring forward. Right from day one, from its inception, the government was not prepared to move whatsoever on the procedure whereby we could handle this.

It was either their way or the highway, and that was on the 11th, Mr. Speaker.

Now you talk about closure and you talk about a subamendment and you talk about the unilateral changing of the rules of this House. Well, that same night on the 11th — yesterday, yesterday in the dark hours of the night, I might add, Mr. Speaker, sometime after 10 o'clock, sometime after 10 o'clock at night, this notice of motion was laid on the Clerk's desk.

This notice of motion — and you talk about closure, and I want the folks out there to understand. This was the motion laid out by the Government House Leader that says this: I give notice that I shall on Thursday next . . . And to explain what happens here is when you're going to make a motion like this, we as House leaders have to make sure that we do it 48 hours before it takes effect. And so by doing it at 10:30 last night, of course yesterday counted as a day. And normally perhaps we might not be aware of this until this morning, so we wouldn't have had proper time to react to it. But having done it at 10:30 last night, it comes into effect tomorrow.

This is what comes into effect, Mr. Speaker, this notice of motion "That, notwithstanding the Rules of the Assembly" . . . Notice that . . . notwithstanding the rules of the Assembly" . . . Very, very similar to some terminology that is used in the GRIP Bill itself. Doesn't matter what the rules are.

The Speaker: — Order. Order. I am not calling the member to order, but I am not going to have a repeat of last night when . . . I'm simply saying I'm not going to have a repeat of last night when there was constant interference on that side of the House — I'm not picking out anybody — but on that side of the House when members are speaking. And so I ask members to allow the member from Rosthern to have his say.

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I can't understand why people would be interested in doing any other talking than listening to me because I think I'm doing a fairly good job of explaining the situation. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, now that we have their attention. "That, notwithstanding the Rules of the Assembly" — this is how this closure motion of time allocation works. And they begin, Mr. Speaker, by saying notwithstanding the rules of this Assembly. What does that mean? It means that the Government House Leader is telling us, I don't care what the rules of this Assembly are. We'll chuck them all out. If any rule of this Assembly stands in my way, they don't count. They don't count. That's exactly what it means. That's exactly what it means — notwithstanding the rules of the Assembly.

All right now what is he going to try to accomplish? This notice of motion says "That, notwithstanding the Rules of the Assembly, and following the adoption of this motion" — which could be in three months from now because we intend this to its bitter end:

and following the adoption of this motion, when the order is called for resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for second reading of Bill 87 (which for those listening, Bill 87 is the GRIP legislation) An Act respecting amendments to Certain Farm Income Insurance Legislation, not more than one sitting day shall be allocated to debate on such order.

not more than one day shall be allocated to debate on such order and that at fifteen minutes before the set time of adjournment, unless sooner concluded, (I guess you thought we might sit down and just let you roll over us — but fifteen minutes before the time of adjournment) the Speaker shall (He has no choice. The Speaker shall) interrupt the proceedings and put every question necessary to dispose of the order . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — That is the response of members opposite, I say to the public. They don't care. Closure, time allocation, whatever stands in our way . . . You heard the clap. You heard the clap, notwithstanding the rules of the Assembly. It doesn't matter what the rules of the Assembly are. They don't count. We want our way. Government House Leader, time allocation, subamendment, talks about closure, talks about unilateral action. That's what I'm talking about.

But that's not all. That's not all that this motion says.

There's a couple of pages in this motion. In the dark of the night, this was laid on the desk of the Clerk.

That there shall be (it continues, that there shall be) two sitting days allocated to the consideration of the said Bill in the Committee of the Whole . . .

Two days — two days in the Committee of the Whole. For those of you who don't understand what the Committee of the Whole is, that is the time that we finally have an opportunity to ask the Minister of Agriculture questions about the detail of that Bill. And we will keep him there. Normally we would have kept him there until we got the answers.

But we know that the government doesn't want us to force the answer out of the Minister of Agriculture. So what have they said? The Government Leader has come to his rescue and said, it doesn't matter what the rules of this Assembly are, we are going to give this opposition two sitting days, two sitting days in the Committee of the Whole, so that we will have opportunity to put forth amendments.

We don't like a lot about the Bill. So we as the opposition are going to put forward amendments. But we have to convince the government that these amendments are good. And that takes debate. That takes give and take, question and answer, before finally we hope to convince the government to make some changes to that Bill. That's what the essence of this Committee of the Whole process is all about.

But he said:

. . . there shall be two sitting days allocated to the consideration of the said Bill in the Committee of the Whole, and that at fifteen minutes before the set time of adjournment on the second . . . day, unless sooner concluded, the Chairman shall put every question . . .

It's the Chairman this time because the Speaker's not involved in the Committee of the Whole. So the Chairman, the Deputy Speaker probably, will now have to put every question necessary. Listen to this:

. . . the Chairman shall put every question necessary to dispose of every section of the Bill not yet passed, (at the conclusion of that time) and shall report the Bill forthwith to the House, and the question for first and second reading of any amendments shall be put forthwith and decided with . . . (listen to this, it shall be decided) without amendments or debate . . .

Without amendments or debate. Nothing else, that's it. It's done. That dirty deed will be done. And when, Mr. Speaker, will that dirty deed be accomplished? Fifteen minutes before adjournment of the House, quarter to eleven at night, when most of the people of this province are at sleep sound in their beds. That's when this deed shall be accomplished.

(2030)

And, Mr. Speaker, it concludes that there shall be two days? No, Mr. Speaker, not two days, because by now they are in a hurry.

That there shall be two hours allocated to consideration of the motion for third reading of the said Bill, (two hours) and at the expiration of two hours, unless sooner concluded, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and put every question necessary to dispose of the order for third reading of the Bill; and,

Still not all:

That consideration of the Bill, pursuant to this motion, be a Special Order of the Assembly to be called immediately after Orders of the Day.

A special order, and the assistant House Leader of the government says, what does that mean? I know how you folks are operating so maybe I should take the time, Mr. Speaker, to explain to the opposite Deputy House Leader what that means. That means, Mr. Deputy House Leader, that under special orders it takes precedence. What you have done now is say, nothing else matters. That comes forward and we go down that narrow road. That's exactly what it means, Mr. Deputy House Leader. For your edification I would explain that to you because you've got nothing else in mind, nothing else in mind except conclusion. It doesn't matter which way of getting your way as quickly as possible and running roughshod over the process in meantime, running roughshod.

Now this of course is becoming common practice, and my colleagues have referred to the fact that we have done that in 1989, but how many times have you folks done that by now? Whenever this motley bunch of 10 over here stands in your way and puts up the good fight, the only thing you can do is steamroll. The steamroller is put into motion and then you accomplish your deed. You accomplish your deed.

And you'll get your way. You'll get your way because we know that ultimately we will cave in. We won't cave in; you will just push us into the ground. That's what will happen. And you'll get your way and it will become law.

But folks, folks, let me tell you, you will pay, you will pay. Let there be no doubt about it. The people of Saskatchewan don't see this as a rural issue only. The people of Saskatchewan don't see this as being issue of only GRIP and farmers. The people of Saskatchewan see this as a condemnation of their rights throughout, because there is nothing to stop you. There's nothing to stop you.

That, Mr. Speaker, is the problem with that motion and why I have spent some considerable time explaining the process. And I agree with the member from Thunder Creek and some of my colleagues who have said that maybe the House leaders weren't the best guys to handle this, because we approach it from the administrative point of view. And you, Mr. Speaker, being a teacher as well as I being a teacher, we know too many things in the school system, and so on, always operate for the ease of administration. And I can hear some of my principal

friends out there hollering at that one.

So maybe the House leaders here are interested in the political aspect of the game and the administrative aspects of the House. Maybe they weren't the right ones, Mr. Speaker, but we tried. I tried. And I give the House Leader on the government side credit. He was adamant in his beliefs and he was determined to see his way through. And that's fair enough. We tried but we were not successful.

So I come now, Mr. Speaker, to another aspect of this subamendment which says that the Minister of Agriculture and the opposition member responsible for Agriculture be the principals that are going to be involved. Now that seems logical to me. That seems logical to me that those would be the folks that maybe should address this. And I don't know too much about the Minister of Agriculture. Of course I can read a résumé of his qualifications and education and so on, and his mental facilities — I don't think they're in question at all — and I give the member that. I think he's quite capable that way.

But the interpretation of the events is, I think, Mr. Minister of Agriculture, your interpretation of events. And the direction in which you're going, I take great issue with that.

Now having said that, Mr. Speaker, I also at the same time have to accept the fact that he holds the office of Minister of Agriculture. And there's nothing that we can do about that from this side, except we're giving it a pretty darn good try, I think, to do something about it, but it's not within our parameters or within our mandate to make any changes there.

But you are the member of this Legislative Assembly that has the trust of the Premier who has appointed you to be Minister of Agriculture. And as such, you hold one of the most important and the most powerful portfolios on the Treasury Board and around the cabinet table.

And you affect, sir, I would suggest, the lives of more families in Saskatchewan than almost any other one of the ministers in a direct fashion, in a direct fashion. And not only in an economical fashion but certainly in the way of life and all these other kinds of things.

So having said that, I'm not going to pursue that particular issue because you are the Minister of Agriculture and it's your responsibility and you are the one that should be involved. That's what we're saying. All right.

Now having said that, we can also take a look at our side and say which is the member from our side that should be involved in trying to come to some kind of a resolution here? And of course we take a look at the member from Morse.

Why would the member of Morse be considered from our side to be the proper individual to handle this situation? Well if I could be forgiven to take a media guide booklet, because what it basically does is it gives a . . . no not an autopsy, what do you call that? Biography. Sorry, Mr. Speaker, I knew that didn't sound right.

But it does give a biography of the individual. And I'm just going to read this into the record, Mr. Speaker, because I know the member from Morse is too modest to come forward and say why he should be the individual from our side to take the negotiation stance with the Minister of Agriculture.

This member from Morse was born in 1941 so he's got the advantage of middle age. A lot of vast experience under his belt by now but still very, very alert. He participates in family ranching operations in Swift Current area.

Qualifications for dealing with agricultural issues? He spent his life on the farm. Spent his life in a ranching operation. He's a former councillor, Mr. Speaker, a former councillor, and I know I am one and there's about three or four others of us that have been councillors. But more than just a councillor, Mr. Speaker, he was also the reeve of the RM (rural municipality) of Saskatchewan Landing.

He was also a director of the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities. So he was a director of SARM and knows inside out the intricacies of that organization and the concerns that its members have. So that's another reason, Mr. Speaker, why this member should be part of the negotiating process.

And he's also a member of both the Saskatchewan federation of agriculture — I suppose that's when that organization was still alive, because I went to its funeral as well back 1985, I believe it was — and the rail line abandonment committee, Mr. Speaker, also of the rail line abandonment committee. First elected, Mr. Speaker, to the legislature in 1982, and of course this is where he has a tremendous advantage over the Minister of Agriculture himself because of the vast experience that he has under his belt.

Now he was appointed to cabinet in 1989 as associate minister of Agriculture and Food, and he was also the minister responsible for the Saskatchewan Water Corporation, Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan Horse Racing Commission, and the Souris Basin Development Authority. In other words, Mr. Speaker, involved intricately with a whole host of organizations in this province whose primary concern is the welfare of agriculture.

In 1977 this member, Mr. Speaker, was awarded the Queen's Silver Jubilee medal for his contribution to local government, so that member, Mr. Speaker, is eminently well qualified to take that particular position.

But I want to point out another thing to you, Mr. Speaker. I want to point out to you that not only is the member of Morse eminently qualified for this particular position, but I'm not quite sure whether I would nominate him for that position. And I might beg to differ with some of my colleagues who have spoken, but that's what gives us the vitality within our caucus that we are free to speak our minds and give of our opinions. And hope that the member of Morse does not hold this against me when I say that perhaps the member that is most eminently

qualified . . .

And, Mr. Speaker, I draw your attention to the subamendment. The subamendment says that the Minister of Agriculture and the opposition member responsible for Agriculture. Now I'm not quite sure in my own mind whether that is the former premier right now or whether it is . . . and the present member from Morse.

But I'm going to take, Mr. Speaker, and just outline for you the reasons why I think it could be the member for Estevan that we're looking at on this side to do exactly what that subamendment is asking.

Why? Well, Mr. Speaker, the reason is very simple, and the reason is that this man was born in 1944. I don't think he's too concerned about people knowing when he was born. He was educated, Mr. Speaker, with a Bachelor of Science and Agriculture at the University of Saskatchewan; Master of Agricultural Economics and Business Administration in marketing at the University of Alberta.

He received a doctorate in Agricultural Economics from Ohio State University, and until 1979, taught agricultural economics at the University of Saskatchewan. He was elected as the 12th premier of Saskatchewan in 1982, and he has been the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party since November, 1979.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in 1985 he took over the portfolio of minister of Agriculture in addition to responsibilities as premier. He currently is honorary patron of many charitable and cultural groups and in '83 was awarded the Vanier Award as one of Canada's outstanding leaders.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this man that I'm talking about right now is most eminently qualified in terms of education, in terms of having the ability and capability of handling any job that comes his way. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, more so as the previous minister of Agriculture, we must take a look at the history of this man in terms of agriculture in this province.

Now I know those folks out there who are listening, who are farmers themselves or once removed from the farm and still extremely interested in what happens on the farm scene, will understand what he has done for agriculture — the programs, the going-to-the-wall for the farmers of this province, and the families, farm families of this province, for his ability to go out to Ottawa and come back home with billions and billions and billions of dollars time and time again. As a matter of fact, I believe the total of the monies received from Ottawa directly because of his intervention is to the tune of \$13 billion — \$13 billion.

Now we have the minister of Agriculture with the Premier going to Ottawa and goodness knows how many trips to get money from Ottawa. They're always squawking on that side about Ottawa's failure to live up to their promises and so on, but yet they don't seem to be able to come home with a penny, to come home with bills — to come home with bills. And maybe I should ask the Minister of Agriculture, what is the size of the total bill that you have drummed up, for the taxpayers of this

province to face and to pay, in your attempt to get money out, and not succeeding in doing that?

(2045)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is why I think that either one of the members that we have been talking about here would do a very good job in getting together, be it on that train to Vancouver or whatever, getting together with the Minister of Agriculture and settling this thing — settling this thing not in an arbitrary way, not, as the subamendment suggests, through the use of closure or through the use of unilateral force as is being done right now. There are other ways. Granted, we as House leaders, Mr. Deputy Speaker, have failed to do the job.

What's imminent right now in this legislature is closure and unilateral decisions forcing it upon us. That's what the government of the day . . . that's the course that they're on. And that's what this debate is about. That's what this subamendment is about. That's why I've spent the last 10 minutes trying to dissuade government members against the course of action that they are embarked upon because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to take a few moments to explain why, on issues of this significance to the people of Saskatchewan, consultation and listening to the people of Saskatchewan is more important than closure. It's more important than closure because . . .

And I've got a whole list of stuff that my colleagues haven't even come up against yet, but I only want to take a few moments of time just to remind the older members across the way, those that were elected in '86 or prior, of what some of their colleagues have said. And I also, Mr. Deputy Speaker, want to remind the new members of what some of their colleagues have said, recognizing at the same time that conditions and times do change, that nothing is cast in stone, that nothing is, as Julius Caesar has said, as constant as the northern star. Because we know what happened to him 10 minutes after he said it, at least according to William Shakespeare.

But I want to return to my attention for just a moment to some of the things that the member for Regina Elphinstone said back in 1989, the current House Leader for the government. And he said a lot of things and I'm not going to quote them all, except something that he said on October 7, 1989. When, on October 7, 1989, *Hansard*, Mr. Deputy Speaker, records the House Leader of the government saying:

Well I say that closure is the most despicable rule that this government could invoke . . .

And what am I holding in my hand here, Mr. Deputy Speaker? I'm holding in my hand a notice of motion saying that in two sitting days debate will end. This is called closure. This is called closure. And whose name is on the bottom of this closure motion? None other than the Government House Leader, the member from Elphinstone, who in 1989 said:

Well I say that closure is the most despicable rule that this government could invoke . . .

Mr. Speaker, I want to say to you that on this side of

the House, democratic traditions do matter, the traditions of this place do count. Not once, Mr. Deputy Speaker, not once in all the years of CCF (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation) or New Democratic Party administration in this province, not once did we seek to stifle the free speech of this legislature; not once did we seek to limit debate in this House. Not during the heated debates of the late 1940s, not during the medicare crisis, not during that time when the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan was being formed, not once did we seek to limit the rights of the opposition to speak in this legislature.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, so says the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow, August 7, 1989. That's what he said. That's what he said. And I know that he's going to get on his feet after I sit down to explain his actions as opposed to his words.

August 7, 1989, Mr. Deputy Speaker:

I'll put my name on record against this limiting of free speech in the Saskatchewan legislature. And when that day comes and I no longer have a right to sit in this legislature and to speak here, when that day comes, I will at least not go away with the shame of knowing that I was part of a group of men and women who sought to limit those rights in this House.

The same member from Moose Jaw Wakamow said that August 7, 1989.

. . . when that day comes, I will at least not go away with the shame of knowing that I was part of a group of men and women who sought to limit those rights . . .

August 7, 1989, I'm reading out of a transcript from *Hansard*. This is not the actual copy of *Hansard*.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, talking about closure, the force of closure as the subamendment is indicating, the former Speaker of the House, on August 4, 1989 as well, Mr. Brockelbank, who was not the Speaker at the time when he said this — I should clarify that — but he says:

Mr. Speaker, this government is above the law. I've mentioned that the law of this Assembly is closure, rule 31. When the law is not what they want it to be, they change the law. These laws, the rules of . . . (this) Assembly, are laws just as sure as any statutes of Saskatchewan. They're the laws by which this highest court in the province is governed. And when the majority take it upon themselves to change the law arbitrarily, that is not good for democracy.

So said the former Speaker. And now, Mr. Speaker, we see that closure, closure is being used here. But the thing that I don't like about the closure is not so much the closure itself, but what the closure is being used for. And the closure is being used for, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to strip the citizens of this province of their basic, fundamental rights.

If you strip me of my rights through closure in speaking in here, I guess I'm a big enough guy to take that. But why are you using closure? You're using closure so that you can force the people of this province to lose their fundamental constitutional rights that everyone should have their day in court, that everybody should be equal before the law. But you guys and gals over the way are saying, no, that's not the case. This government is above the law.

That's what I find abhorrent, not so much the closure aspect. Because you got to do your thing; I can appreciate that. But it boils down to the fundamental problem that we've been having in this legislature ever since you came down with that court case in Melville. That's what the problem is. You're putting yourselves above the law. And you're depriving normal, everyday, hard-working citizens of this province. Currently the ones in the greatest jeopardy are the farmers. They are in imminent danger. They're in the front lines right now, because this is aimed specifically at them right now and you're going to remove their constitutional rights.

And you're going to say, yes, we made a mistake. But we're going to cover it up, by golly, so that there's just absolutely no way you can get at us. And that's what that Bill does. That Bill is so abhorrent. Because every nook and cranny where somebody could have come at you, has been taken care of. You must have had a flock of lawyers working on it, to make sure that you covered every possible angle. Because you put yourself above the law, totally above the law, removed the rights of individuals in this province to challenge the government. And you've removed that. You've taken that away. That's my biggest beef about this issue. I can live with that closure. I know we did it. But you are using that method to strip the rights of the citizens of this province, and you're starting with farmers.

And that's why folks in the cities are calling us up, and saying holy mackerel, this can't be going on. Because if this is happening to the farmers, you're going to do that everywhere. And I'll give you an example of that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Closure used to be something that was totally frowned upon in Ottawa until they did it once. And then they did it twice. And now it's an almost weekly occurrence on one thing or another.

I have to say one thing with you folks. You sure pick up quickly on closure. How many times have you done it now? Could somebody answer? Is it three times? Or is it four by now?

You know we just got this other motion that I just read into the record. Here is another time allocation. And I'll tell you one thing. And I tell that Government House Leader, if you think you're going to ram this through with more extended hours or if you think you're going to ram this thing through without closure on closure . . . This is time allocation, this puts everything into one nice neat little shell and says you got two days here, one day here, and two hours there, finished, done. Doesn't matter what you do during that time, it's finished.

That's what this rule says. But let me tell you folks, before

that rule comes into effect — and I suspect the Government House Leader is going to move this as a special order tomorrow morning at 9 o'clock — that's a debatable motion. That's a debatable motion and we're going to debate it. And we will be here till September debating that motion because it ain't going to pass. And the only way that motion is going to pass — this closure motion — is to what . . . give me a guess, take a guess. You're going to be putting closure on closure to get that through because we're not going to allow it to happen. That's what's going to happen. And I'm telling you that right now. We'll be in here till September debating that motion.

If you think you're going to run this caucus of 10 into the ground with the determination that we've got, you've got another thought coming. You've got another thought coming. We're going to stand up for the people if you're not going to.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I've tried to make my points as succinctly as possible. I know there was a . . . you see that's the problem with debate. The member from Swift Current says, they failed miserably. Deaf ears, deaf ears. So I made them succinctly. There were a lot of issues that I wanted to cover. I've done that. I've made my points. I rest my case. And I thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for your indulgence. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Roy: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and fellow members of the legislature. It gives me a great pleasure to engage in this debate on the proposed subamendment moved by the member from Arm River which I strongly oppose.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's important for the public of Saskatchewan and the members opposite that they have a little bit of historical background as to why we've reached such a state of paralysis in the legislature here, Mr. Speaker.

I think from the first day, Mr. Speaker, that the members opposite entered into this legislature and took their seats, Mr. Speaker, there has been one thing and one thing alone on their mind, and that has been to obstruct and try to stall the proceedings of this legislature and the work of the Government of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Roy: — And to prove that, Mr. Speaker, we just go back to last fall, December 16, the session last fall, Mr. Speaker. That day, Mr. Speaker, the opposition walked out for four hours letting the bells ring, Mr. Speaker. And that was a start, Mr. Speaker, that was an indication of what the opposition was going to be doing in their mandate, Mr. Speaker. And now it's continued in this session, Mr. Speaker.

The government has come into this session with an agenda. We brought in a budget, a throne speech, Mr. Speaker, and we've moved on. We're bringing in legislation mandated by the people, Mr. Speaker. But what have we seen by the opposition members? Nothing

again but obstruction. That is, Mr. Speaker, that is unacceptable and we cannot continue that kind of activity.

(2100)

Mr. Speaker, this whole GRIP issue . . . and the members opposite have used it as an issue to try to wreak revenge on the government, on the government, Mr. Speaker. That's what they have done, Mr. Speaker. It's all an issue of revenge and spite. It's not democracy, Mr. Speaker; far from it, far from it. We know it's not.

Mr. Speaker, they have had 60-some days where they could have let this Bill be introduced into this House and debated. But what happened, Mr. Speaker? No, they filibustered and they've tried to stall it and tried to avoid bringing it in.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk a little bit about democracy. And the member from Rosthern talks about democracy. Well there are some very important pillars that hold up the democratic institution. One of the main pillars, Mr. Speaker, is that the majority . . . the government is elected by a majority. And when they come in here, Mr. Speaker, they come in here to do their work, Mr. Speaker.

That's not to say that the minority is not to be listened to. They are, Mr. Speaker. And that's not to say that the opposition does not have an important role to play in this institution; the opposite, they have a very important role.

But have we seen that from the members opposite? Absolutely not. We have seen them irresponsibly, irresponsibly hijacking this House for their own personal political agenda. That's what it's been, Mr. Speaker. And we will not tolerate that any further.

Mr. Speaker, I think that it's important to realize that this government has some very important work to do. We have a lot of legislation ahead of us that we must move on — pressing issues, Mr. Speaker, important issues to the people of this province. And the members opposite are holding that up.

Mr. Speaker, when they walked out of this legislature for 18 days on this particular issue, Mr. Speaker, what did they do? Did they go out and try to galvanize public opinion on this issue? No. They were on the golf courses, Mr. Speaker, or taking holidays. Can we tolerate that, Mr. Speaker? No, we cannot.

I just want to touch a bit on the member from Rosthern's comments. And he was talking about the hon. member from Morse making some very salient points on democracy, on time allocation, and closure. Mr. Speaker, I just want to go back to the hon. member from Morse's comments from August 7, 1989 on the issue of closure, Mr. Speaker. And I quote from August 7, the hon. member from Morse:

We can no longer, Mr. Speaker, focus our thoughts on obstructing for obstruction's sake. We can no longer obstruct just to present our own perspective. We have to deal with governing this province, Mr. Speaker.

August 7, 1989, the member from Morse. Now what's happened? What kind of flip-flop, Mr. Speaker? I tell you that is unacceptable and we will not tolerate that.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to say that democracy has survived a long, long time. And I'm telling you that it will survive in the future. And this legislature will not be hijacked and it will not be terrorized by 10 members who have one thing on their mind, and that's to rebuild their political credibility and to destroy this institution, Mr. Speaker. That's what it is. That's what it is. Mr. Speaker, they hold so much contempt for this institution and they have forced us, Mr. Speaker, they have forced us, the government, to have to implement these measures because we have no alternative.

Our House Leader, Mr. Speaker, has negotiated with the Opposition House Leader but to no avail. You cannot bargain, you cannot compromise with terrorists, Mr. Speaker — you can't. And that's the point we've reached, Mr. Speaker.

So in closing, Mr. Speaker, I just want to say that the Government of Saskatchewan is going to move on with the work, the important work of the people of this province, and we will not let this kind of foolishness carry on any further.

I want to tell you again, Mr. Speaker, that I will strongly be opposing this subamendment and this amendment. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — I want to, Mr. Speaker, enter this debate on the matter before us today and I want to comment to the individuals opposite about my observation about the philosophy of this House. And I want to point out the significant difference between the discussion at that point in time because it was a difference of philosophy.

This, ladies and gentlemen . . . and I want to point it out to the members opposite. It was a difference of philosophy of whether SaskEnergy should or should not be sold. That was the basic discussion that was going on. That, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and to members of this Assembly, was exactly what that was all about. And obstruction for obstruction's sake on that basis was the reason why it was done.

And I want to point out what the difference is in this legislation and what was done over there. The truth, Mr. Member from Swift Current, is this, the truth, Mr. Minister of Energy and Mines, is this: the truth is that you are taking, through your Minister of Agriculture, and voiding all of the incidents that occurred from 1991, on January 1, and up to this date. And you are going to have that Minister of Agriculture rewrite all the details of what he thinks transpired in that period of time.

And that, Mr. Minister of Agriculture, is what the member from Kinistino was talking about.

Can I just point out another thing? I had a meeting with a gentleman from Kinistino today. And, Mr. Minister, Mr.

Deputy Speaker, I had a visit with this gentleman and he said his neighbour had a crop that was this high.

And that, Mr. Minister . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The Minister of Finance says the heads were that big. No, sir, they were standing straight up, and they reminded him of the Premier because the heads were empty.

That, Mr. Speaker, was what the communication was about. . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, sir, Mr. Member from Swift Current, I'm going to talk to you about philosophy. I said it before. This Bill excludes you from court, sir. Your family won't be able to go to court.

The Deputy Speaker: — Order, order. Order. The subamendment before us is quite restrictive and narrow in scope, and it deals with substituting Minister of Agriculture and the Agriculture representative in place of the House leaders and also introduces the notion of closure. I think that debate, then, should be on those points.

Mr. Martens: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I just want to make one further point, and that is that the matter of closure, in dealing with this issue, is going to restrict men and women from the province of Saskatchewan to realize in court their significant constitutional right — a right that has been established through the traditions, not only of the Parliament of Canada, not only through the traditions of the Parliament of Canada, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but through the traditions of the parliament in the British Commonwealth and in Britain itself.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, closure upon closure upon closure is going to place the court below the viability of this House. And, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Deputy Speaker, closure and the Bill that is before us today is going to do that.

Now you want to talk about principles? Those are principles, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I will state this one extra point and then I will deal directly with the Bill.

I called the president of SARM and I asked him what was going to happen if this was going to take place. And he said, I'll tell you this. I'll tell you this, that people went to war twice to defend the principles of freedom before the court and access to the court. That, Mr. Speaker, was his words. And if any of you have the courage to ask him some time, you ask him about that. I challenge you to do that because that is exactly what he told me.

Now I want to deal with the amendment, the subamendment in a various fashion, and I want to deal with it first of all in the aspect of the credibility of the member from Estevan in relating and becoming involved in a discussion with the Minister of Agriculture provincially. And, because the discussion has involved the federal minister and could possible involve the federal minister, I believe it's necessary to involve him in the discussion.

We have, Mr. Speaker, an individual who has distinguished himself as a person who has the capacity, number one, to negotiate, has the capacity because of his education to deal with the component of discussing the economics of agriculture in a way that surpasses any

member of this Assembly. And, Mr. Speaker, not only have I witnessed that as a part of what his education has provided, but I've witnessed that in his discussion in various areas. And I'll point some of them out to you. One of them is in his capacity to bring together the ministers of Agriculture from across Canada to have a single focus. And I want to point out in one area that may surprise the Minister of Agriculture from Saskatchewan, and his capacity to deal with this.

At no time in the discussion on transportation could Sask Wheat Pool ever get the method of payment to be established on the discussion in transportation, in the federal transportation committee. Not once could they do that. And that, Mr. Minister, and to the members of this Assembly, is a fact. They had four or five different methods of allowing the method of payment to change. And at no time were the ministers of Agriculture from across Canada allowed to deal with this in perspective. And Sask Wheat Pool, although they were on the committee, could not provide to the people of the committee in transportation, at no time could they provide to them the significance of the method of payment to be established as it was in the Crow. Mr. Speaker, my point is this. The capacity of the member from Estevan to put that on the table is the reason why he should be included as a part of the discussion.

Mr. Speaker, I want to point out to the members opposite who have trouble hearing and listening, one of the things that you asked for continually over and over and over again was for the member from Estevan to fly with you to Ottawa to be a part of the group of people that was over there. You have said that to this Assembly more than once. As a matter of fact, you have said to this Assembly that we were never in favour of getting money from Ottawa — two things that you have said.

(2115)

Now if you are so all-powered benevolent, why don't you take the suggestion in having the member from Estevan and you, sir, as the Minister of Agriculture, get together and do the right thing in relation to this Bill. That, Mr. Minister, is exactly what we're talking about.

Mr. Speaker, why does he vote against it? Does he vote against change? No, he votes against the fact that you are unilaterally taking people's day in court away from them . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Okay, so you think you're one better. You think you're all better. Now why don't you take the offer that we're making as members of the opposition and ask the Leader of the Opposition, the member from Estevan, to deal with the problem as it exists? That, Mr. Minister, is what we're asking. That is a legitimate proposal.

I want to point out some other things. I just read about Simon de Jong in a letter that was dropped off at our desk in the caucus office, and Simon de Jong was talking about how he was a part of the Finance Committee. Why was he a part of the Finance Committee? Mr. Minister and Mr. Deputy Speaker, he was a part of the Finance Committee — why? — because the Parliament of Canada allowed him to do that. And you're going to say no to the former minister of Agriculture for the province of Saskatchewan

and the premier and a person who has a great deal of respect in Manitoba and Saskatchewan and Alberta.

As a matter of fact, as a matter of fact, members of this Assembly, when I was in Humboldt . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Mr. Speaker, if the member from Regina, the Minister of Finance, wants to talk about people going to jail, why doesn't he say that out of the House? Why doesn't he say that out of the House? Because he is typical of all of the things that they represent, and that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is a fact. Go pick up your PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyl) in downtown Regina and bury them in the proper place. That's maybe what you should do.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the content and the reason of this motion is to establish a reasonable solution to a problem. This government is hidebound and determined — why, why, Mr. Minister? — it's hidebound and determined not to change its course regardless of who they destroy in the way, regardless of what the principles that they're going to destroy. They're going to do it anyway. That, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is why we're here debating.

The principles of justice are being ignored. At no time have we stood in the way of justice. No time. Mr. Speaker, the members opposite talk about Rafferty. Not one single licence was disobeyed. Not one single court order was disobeyed. That, Mr. Minister, and, Mr. Speaker, are a fact.

Now we want to talk about getting involved with people so that they can do the honourable thing. Why not take the people's, the farmers' . . . why not take the farmers' view of it? If you don't want to take the member from Estevan's view of it or mine or the member from Thunder Creek or the member from Rosthern or from Arm River, why don't you do what the member from Melville said? Why don't you do what the member from Melville said, Mr. Speaker?

Meanwhile, one group that has not yet been heard from about the GRIP debate is NDP back-benchers from rural constituencies. Why don't you take their advice? Why don't you take their advice and make some changes to the GRIP program? Why don't you? They don't agree with you.

As a matter of fact, people have told us about the member from Tisdale not agreeing with you. The member from Shaunavon has been down there talking about that to the same people over there. Why don't you do what they say? Why don't you do what the people want? That's all we're asking. They want their day in court, Mr. Speaker.

And we're asking you to consider the Minister of Agriculture, the former minister of Agriculture, the two of them getting together and doing the thing right. Allow the member from Estevan, who has a significant role in agriculture, Mr. Speaker, has a significant role in relation to that. And that, Mr. Speaker, is exactly what we're talking about.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to point something out. The member from Estevan is the critic in Agriculture. Now I want you to know that . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No,

the member from Estevan is; and that, Mr. Speaker, is precisely the point that we're making. The member from Estevan, who has a credible history in agriculture, he has established himself across Canada in significant ways. We're asking you, sir, to become involved with him so that he can deal with it in a proper fashion.

Actually, Mr. Speaker, why . . . I'm going to point this out. I had a hog board meeting in Swift Current one day earlier this summer and there were some people there from Humboldt, and I won't mention their names. But they said to me, Mr. Speaker, this: I wish I had not voted for the guy that I did in Humboldt and had voted for the member from Estevan . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I know they were . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh I doubt it. I doubt that. Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. I just want to remind members . . . I was just in my office watching the debate, and the member that was on his feet at that particular time was not the member that was being heard over the TV. They were other members, and particularly one particular member was heard constantly on the television.

So I ask members, please, the members out there watching want to hear the member that is on his or her feet, and that's the person that should be heard, not all the other members that are interrupting. So I ask the member from Morse to continue with his debate.

Mr. Martens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to point out why I believe that the member from Estevan should be involved in the debate. And I want to point out to this Assembly that the reason that I want to point out the member from Estevan should be a part of that is that he has provided for himself a credible reputation across Canada to negotiate these kinds of opportunities.

Now let's take some realism and put this into place. For nine years the premier; for roughly six years the minister of Agriculture. Ten years of the most difficult, Mr. Speaker, the most difficult times in agriculture's history in Canada, including the '30s. In 1984 and '85 and in '88, every one of those years there was significantly less rain in the province of Saskatchewan than at any other period of time. And this member from Estevan was the one that pulled the financing through from Ottawa.

And I want to put this into perspective. I want to put this into perspective because one of the gentlemen in the meeting in Humboldt said this — and the Minister of Agriculture will know — he said this, when the Minister of Agriculture was talking about the massive debt of the Saskatchewan budget. One individual, and I don't know what his name is, said this. He said, I want you to know, Mr. Minister — speaking to the Minister of Agriculture now for Saskatchewan — I want you to know that I took some of that money. I took some of that money that was delivered by the member from Estevan. I took some of that money. And every one of the farmers in this Assembly today, every one of them was a part of that delivery system. And the member from Estevan was the one that provided it year after year after year.

Now let's talk about your record, Mr. Minister. Why?

Why did you ask the member from Estevan to participate with you in your trip to Ottawa? Because you knew, sir, you knew, sir, that without him there you would get nowhere. And that's precisely what has happened. Mr. Speaker, what we are doing here now is asking you, sir, we're asking you to become involved with the member from Estevan to see whether you can work out a deal that would enhance the opportunity for the people of the province of Saskatchewan. That is, Mr. Speaker, what we're doing.

The education of the member from Estevan and his involvement in the discussion has been raised here before. But I want to point out, and it's necessary to do that, that he has had significant education in Saskatchewan, in Alberta and in the United States in order to get a doctorate in agriculture economics. And, Mr. Speaker, there is no one in this Assembly who matches that. There is no one.

And therefore, Mr. Speaker, I believe that it is incumbent upon the Minister of Agriculture who recognized the need, who recognized the need of him going along to Ottawa, not once . . . And I have heard him say it over and over in this Assembly constantly saying, come along with us. Do it together, Mr. Speaker; do it together.

And now, Mr. Speaker, we're offering to do it together, but what offer have we had in return? Not a thing, Mr. Speaker — as a matter of fact the member from Kinistino says we are unilaterally stopping any progress in this House.

And, Mr. Speaker, I say to the Minister of Agriculture, you asked for the member of Estevan to go along with you. And now when we allow that opportunity to you to do that, what do you do? Your members thumb their nose at us. We're asking to participate. What is this? A new democratic process?

And that, Mr. Minister, is exactly the reason why we put this subamendment onto here. Because you, sir, have been asking for the member from Estevan to go along with you. And now when the opportunity is presented, why don't you take it? And that, Mr. Minister, and Mr. Speaker, is the reason why we're doing it.

I want to point out some other things that are necessary to add to this debate. And I want to point out to the members of this Assembly the other part of this motion that I think is significant. The other part of the motion that is significant is the statements made by individuals.

Now I had a statement read to me about obstruction for obstruction's sake, and I accept that. But I want to point out, Mr. Speaker, that there is a significant difference between obstructing in this Assembly for obstruction's sake and obstructing individuals in their course of justice. And that, Mr. Speaker, is precisely what I'm going to make a point of.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice made these statements in a speech on August 7, 1989, and it's referring to the motion of closure:

. . . this motion has been referred to in this

legislature by a number of speakers on this side of the House as an act of desperation.

Mr. Speaker, closure is being introduced here as an act of desperation in my opinion, an act of desperation by a government who is on the wrong side of the issue. They are on the wrong side of the issue and therefore they're just hidebound to force their way, overpower their way, and force closure on the discussion here today. And, Mr. Speaker, they have done that over and over and over again.

And the Minister of Justice says:

... I agree with that. I think that it is correct. It is an act of desperation simply because the government has found that it can't sell this idea, the people just aren't buying it.

Mr. Speaker, that's exactly what's happening with GRIP. People aren't buying it. Mr. Speaker, people aren't buying the idea that they can't go to court, that you're excluding them from court. They aren't buying it. And you're saying this is a desperate act by a desperate government, anxious to get out of here, to do whatever you're going to do.

(2130)

And that, Mr. Speaker, is precisely why this part is in here about closure. That, Mr. Speaker, is precisely the point.

The second point that the Minister of Justice made on August 7, 1989 is this:

They're not winning the debate, and this is a desperation attempt to end the debate in the rather naive belief that you're going to ... go ahead with the privatization ... (as it was discussed at that time.)

A matter of philosophy at that time and if you think this is a matter of philosophy this time, I'm proud to stand on obstruction. Because you, sir, by closure are not allowing anyone to debate this.

And the second point is that you are excluding people from their legal, constitutional right to participate in recourse before the court — precisely the reason why we're objecting. And that, Mr. Minister, is a fundamental right that individuals across this province, across Canada, have. And that is being obstructed.

It's an act of desperation, and I don't know why. I've had observations made to me, well we've got three years to prove what kind of opposition we are, whether we have credibility or not. That, Mr. Minister and Mr. Speaker, is not the point to have the closure brought in, unilaterally changing the lives of people without consultation, without involvement. Closure in this Bill is ... you're closing off debate on a fundamental right. And that is why, Mr. Speaker, we have serious, serious objections to this.

Mr. Speaker, it's a debate that they're not winning. Mr. Speaker, it's a debate they're not winning. Now in order to understand rural farm people, you have to understand

what they're all about. They don't go around carrying signs. They don't go around dumping wheat on the front lawn. They don't go around doing those kinds of things because they're not that kind of people.

They are honest, forthright individuals who, when you meet them, they will tell you, this is what's bothering me. And then they conclude with that. And that, Mr. Speaker, is why I see this kind of demonstration that we have here today, where a government who has a vast majority ... And I respect that, but I don't respect the decision, Mr. Speaker, to deal with closure — to deal with closure on a Bill that takes away the rights of individuals before the court, plain and simple.

And I think the things that concern me again on this whole matter is the decision on closure, to unilaterally change the rules of this Assembly. At no time, Mr. Speaker, have we excluded from debate any of the Bills that have been brought forward except this one. Which ones have we not debated? Which ones have we not provided adequate discussion in a concrete and demonstrative way? Mr. Speaker, we have done that with all of them. And, Mr. Speaker, on this Bill they have used closure every step of the way. Why, Mr. Speaker? Because when we said what it was going to do, it did what it did, and we were right all the time.

You're taking away, by closure, the democratic right of this opposition to speak, to speak on an issue, Mr. Speaker, that my family fought for in the Second World War. And that, Mr. Speaker, is what these people are doing. They're taking away that right from access to information and access to demonstrating the kinds of things that are available. Mr. Speaker, that is a fundamental proof of what we're doing.

I want to point out to the members of this Assembly that I had uncles in the war, and my wife had uncles in the war, and, Mr. Speaker, I had cousins in the war, and that was the reason why they went. They went to defend their right to speak in a free and democratic society without restriction, without closure, without the decision to deal with this in a way that is practical and pragmatic, and that is that the demonstration here of this massive majority ... are doing by forcing their unilateral will on the people by closure. Mr. Speaker, the people in the province of Saskatchewan will not forget this. They will not.

I want to point out some other things that have been said by individuals that I think are significant. And that is that time allocation has been provided again where it limits debate to a certain amount of time. Now, Mr. Speaker, on second reading like we're doing here today, after the motion goes forward and it is voted off, it will limit, in a way of closure, they'll limit the debate to one day. One day, Mr. Speaker, for a decision that will affect 50,000 contracts, one day that we can debate this in a way that is realistic and pragmatic. And, Mr. Speaker, I think that that's wrong. I have always said it's wrong. I have speech after speech of members opposite who have said it's wrong. And all that they can point back to me and say, obstruct for obstruction's sake.

And, Mr. Speaker, that is precisely why I don't believe this Bill should go forward. Because the difference between at

that time was a philosophical reason different than mine. And this one has to do with the ability of an individual to go to court.

Take away your right as an individual before the law. Take it away. Don't let anybody have it. Don't let those contracts on the 50,000 farmers . . . don't let them have that day in court. Don't.

Your constituents are involved. Your family is involved. Don't you ever think about that? Don't you ever think about what the implications are for your own individual families? That's what we're talking about. You are going to have closure on an individual right of individuals to sue the government.

Well you think you're better than that. Well I don't think you are. And not only will I be proven right, Mr. Speaker, and members of Executive Council, but the people of Canada will show that you're wrong too. Because the Supreme Court in my view will have no choice but to allow them to take you to court.

And then, Mr. Speaker, and Mr. Minister, who's going to pay then? Who will pay? Mr. Speaker, who will pay after closure is placed on the rights of individuals to speak? Who will pay when the Supreme Court says you are not legally doing what you're doing? Who will pay?

Will it be a co-operation effort between farmers and the provincial government and the federal government? I suspect not, Mr. Speaker. On an illegal action taken by a government in an illegal way, it will only be your responsibility. And that, Mr. Speaker, and Mr. Minister, are fairly significant.

I want to point out a number of items that have been said by individuals across the way. August 7, the member from Saskatoon South said this:

That is why, Mr. Speaker, I find this piece of legislation so abhorrent.

Mr. Speaker, closure was the topic of discussion. Closure was the topic of discussion on the basis that it probably was only done twice in that period of time. And now we have had it . . . in the last three weeks we've had it four times.

And that, Mr. Speaker, is exactly why at that time the member from Saskatoon South found it abhorrent and why we find it abhorrent today. And in a far greater way, Mr. Speaker, because this deals with access to the court. This closure motion will take away individuals' rights to appear before the court.

The minister, the Premier of the province of Saskatchewan, said this: he said the court will decide. The Minister of Agriculture twice yesterday said: the court will decide.

This is the court that you're involved with, right here. This is the court that's deciding. And this court is going to say, because of majority on that side of the House, that this court is going to show that the individuals opposite are the jury. And that decision is going to be made by you and

you're going to all vote for excluding people from the court — except those people who have the nerve to stay out.

That, Mr. Speaker, is precisely, is precisely what this discussion is all about. That's why the member from Saskatoon South said, it's abhorrent. And then again he said:

So I say again, you don't have the right, you just don't have the right as a government to tell me whether I can or cannot speak in this legislature. The people will decide that.

It's a matter of privilege to speak in this Assembly, ladies and gentlemen. It's a matter of privilege. And, Mr. Speaker, privilege is being denied.

I'm going to point out one other thing that happened in '89, that the decision to do what we did on the basis of bell-ringing, the decision was made to the members of this Assembly to refer the matter to the Rules Committee. And that, Mr. Speaker, and to the members of this Assembly, is why it was there in the first place. And that is the reason why, Mr. Speaker, we are debating it here today; why we've debated it over the last few days.

I want to talk a little bit about what the member from P.A. (Prince Albert) Carlton said:

What can we say about closure, Mr. Speaker, and closure, or in this case it's a matter of closure on closure.

That means that you've got a time allocation Bill or motion before this Assembly and then you put a closure motion on the time allocation. And that becomes a closure on the closure itself. You limit debate on whether you can have debate. That's what this is.

(And) Sitting back and listening to a lot of the arguments that have been presented, and listening carefully and knowing very well that this is the first time that closure has ever been proposed in this legislature and ever used in this legislature, I can say that to me it smacks somewhat of totalitarianism.

Yes, it smacks of totalitarianism.

He went on to say: "I feel that closure is somewhat of an affront to democracy." Limiting debate — and we had to listen to debates that had many, many times no relevance.

Going on:

I think and I believe that it is the antithesis of democracy — the exact opposite — because what it does is it stifles debate as opposed as to what the democratic principle is of encouraging debate.

Why is the debate stifled in here? Somebody wants to go fishing, so that people's day in court can't be heard? You got somewhere to go? Well, go. Let's talk about what the rights of individuals are on the basis of the freedom that they have to go to court.

If democracy, Mr. Speaker, if democracy implies making decisions that reflect the public good and the public mood, then this motion of closure is definitely an affront to it.

I would like to have you tell me how many farmers at Tisdale, where the crop is less than a foot high, want GRIP '91 versus GRIP '92.

Mr. Speaker, observation has been made that there is no GRIP '91. Well, Mr. Speaker, I think after the Supreme Court decides that your Bill is out of order, there will be a GRIP '91. Mr. Speaker, GRIP '91 will provide an opportunity for the farmers to get what they signed a contract about, and I believe that.

(2145)

The member from P.A. Carlton went on to say:

. . . because closure offends the democratic principle of free speech. I find it very distasteful; I find it a bitter pill to swallow, because it doesn't solve an issue, it smothers it.

No, Mr. Speaker, it smothers it. And that, Mr. Speaker, puts a blanket of doom and gloom over the court system, initiated by the people opposite. That's what it does, and that, Mr. Speaker, is wrong.

I want to go on to talk a little bit about the member from Humboldt. Mr. Speaker, this is what he said:

. . . we are in this debate because this government, I believe, is drunk with power as well. They are so consumed with themselves, so consumed with their friends, and so consumed by the power they wield, they just refuse to allow the democratic process to work.

Well, Mr. Speaker, allowing the democratic process to work in this debate and in others is allowing the speech of individuals — free speech, Mr. Speaker, free speech, the capacity to do it and the willingness to do it and the right to do it. Mr. Speaker, it is just as fundamentally right to be able to speak in this Assembly as it is to speak in a court of law in the province of Saskatchewan. That's a fundamental right of individuals. It's being curtailed here, and as evidenced in the documents that we've received, it will be curtailed in the court.

The Bill says it over and over again. You can't go to court; your rights are extinguished. The incidents that happened will be just wiped away. It never happened. All of the people that did things in 1990 . . . January 1, 1991 in agriculture will be just swept right away. Move it aside because the Minister of Agriculture is going to tell you what happened. He's going to tell you what happened. Closure, in this case, is going to wipe that opportunity to speak away, not only here, Mr. Speaker, but also in the court. He goes on to say:

They simply just do not respond to democracy in a traditional way in this province because they are so drunk with power that they hold.

Mr. Speaker, that's what the member from Humboldt said in 1989.

I want to continue; another observation he made, another observation he made is this:

It sets that arrogant attitude, and let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, I think the reason they're doing this is because every time they do it it becomes easier, it becomes more accepted by the people.

Now this is talking about closure. What about closure on a court case, closure on people's capacity to speak in this Assembly? Next time it might be somebody else who gets caught in being excluded from a court. Close that door. That's closure. Close the door. Don't allow people the freedom, access to the court, to prove their point.

And if you're so sure of yourself, we have made suggestions in this Assembly. Why don't you allow a reference to the Court of Appeal? Why don't you allow a reference from the Court of Appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada? If you are so sure about what you're doing, allow that to happen. Closure, Mr. Speaker, is closure in here, but the Bill is closure for the court in the province of Saskatchewan. That's what it is. I don't think it's going to stand up, nor do I think the people of the justice system will allow it to happen.

It becomes more accepted by the people of this province. Once it's done, then the people, they think, will say, well it's been done before, then they'll accept it a little easier next time and the next time and the next time. Well, Mr. Speaker, it has been in the last few weeks the next time and the next time and the next time — closure over and over again. And that, Mr. Speaker, is a part of the reason why I rise in this debate today. It's why we brought this portion of the amendment into place so that people in the province could realize what was going on.

I want to talk a little bit about what the member from Churchill Downs said in this debate in 1989.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to take part in what I think is an historical debate, the first time closure has ever been invoked in this province. And I sincerely hope it'll be the last time closure is ever invoked in this province.

Mr. Speaker, the member from Churchill Downs, the Associate Minister of Finance said, I hope this is the last time closure . . . This is 1989, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, and here he stands and he says, I'm going to vote for it. Not once, twice, three times, four times, five times. And then you go back to what the member from Humboldt said, it gets easier and easier and easier. Who are you going to obstruct from the court next time? It gets easier and easier and easier.

In December you did one group, now you do another group, tomorrow you'll do another group. Who's the next on the list when closure to the court is going to be used? Closure to the court — that, Mr. Speaker, is exactly what we're talking about.

Mr. Speaker, another comment made by the member from Churchill Downs is this:

Mr. Speaker, it is undoubtedly another factor — I wished it were not so — undoubtedly another factor is simply the desire of members opposite to enjoy their summer.

We're talking about democracy, Mr. Speaker, the democratic right of individuals to appear before a court, and we talk about closure. Closure in this Assembly is one thing, Mr. Speaker, but closure in a court of law is another. Did you have anyone in Canada ever have a closure before the court? Closure before the court is what we're talking about. You're removing the rights of individuals to appear before a court. It says that more than once. Your rights are extinguished. What does that mean? Closure before the court, Mr. Speaker, closure.

And then I want to point out, maybe the members opposite want to go camping or go out for the summer, go fishing. Mr. Speaker, I want to point out to the members opposite that there have been considerable vacancies in the past few weeks. Mr. Speaker, that's the kind of thing that has been happening over and over again. Members opposite . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order, order. Why is the member on his feet?

Mr. Koenker: — I wonder if it's appropriate for the member opposite to be referring to the absence of members from the Chamber?

The Speaker: — Order. Order. I must admit that I did not hear the member refer to anybody's absence but if he did I think the member . . . Order. I think the member from Morse knows that that is improper if he did so, and I just draw that to his attention.

Mr. Martens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm quoting here from the member from Regina Churchill Downs, and he said:

It is undoubtedly another factor — I wished it were not so — undoubtedly another factor is simply the desire of members opposite to enjoy their summer."

And that, Mr. Speaker, is what I believe some of the members opposite have been doing. The member from Regina Churchill Downs went on to say:

They don't want to be here, Mr. Speaker, because they don't want to face the music. They don't want to admit and they don't want to be reminded that the public don't want this.

Mr. Speaker, the people in this province need to have an opportunity to debate this issue. Closure is a closure in this House, but a closure before the court is what your intention is. A closure before the court. Closure here is one thing but closure before the court — I find that disgusting, Mr. Speaker. The member from Churchill Downs went on to say:

They don't want to admit and they don't want to be reminded that the public don't want this. They are acting contrary to public opinion and they are being arrogant, insensitive, and undemocratic.

Mr. Speaker, this is the first time I have had the opportunity to say this. This is the first opportunity that I've had to express the concern of my constituents. And before I spoke this evening, I had a call back from an individual who counsels people in agriculture, and, Mr. Speaker, his observations to me were this. And he's a constituent of mine. His observations to me were this. He said, block it as long as you can because these people are wrong.

They're wrong and I want the people in my constituency to know that I stood up for them, that I stood up for them in every case that I possibly could. And, Mr. Speaker, I will continue to do that because that's my right in this place. But what have we got here? Closure. Closure in debate and closure in the court. Restricting rights in this Assembly and restricting rights in a court of law. That, Mr. Speaker, is precisely what we are debating here today.

The member from Regina Hillsdale, the Minister of Health, said this:

This debate, Mr. Speaker, is about a government with its own agenda, an agenda that is not in the best interest of the people and that is not good for the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I think, Mr. Speaker, that is absolutely accurate. Four years ago almost, three years ago almost to the day, people in this Assembly were in a reversed position. The members opposite were over here, and we were over there. And that's what they said to us. And what did we do, Mr. Speaker? We referred the matter over to the Rules Committee.

This debate is about muzzling the opposition, Mr. Speaker — muzzling the opposition, something that this government is not reluctant to do because we've seen repeated examples of how they've muzzled other people who have effectively spoken out against their policies, their cut-backs . . . their harsh and cruel tactics, Mr. Speaker.

That's the kind of discussion that was being held when closure was taking place in the province of Saskatchewan three years ago.

The member from Regina Hillsdale went on to say:

Another thing that I wish to talk about, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that this motion violates the very spirit of democracy. It violates the right of freedom of discussion, free debate in the legislature on an issue of this importance.

That, Mr. Speaker, comes from the member from Regina Hillsdale, the Minister of Health.

Talk about closure, Mr. Speaker, talking about closure, the will of the people to express their opinions — closure is being administered in this House and in the Bill that

we're debating. Closure will be administered in the court. No question about it, no question about it denying the rights and access of individuals.

The member for Regina Dewdney:

But I want to say, as other colleagues of mine have said, that even though the government may muzzle us in this legislature, we will not be muzzled in saying the things that need to be said, because if we can't say them in here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we will say them from one end of this province wherever we go, because those are the kinds of things that are important to the people of Saskatchewan. Democracy will be protected by this opposition to the largest extent that we can, at every opportunity that we can.

I couldn't have said it better myself. And you put road-blocks in the way, closure after closure after closure. And what has it gotten you?

Mr. Speaker, what we want to do by bringing this amendment forward is allow the member from Estevan and the member from Rosetown-Elrose to put it together and see whether they come to a conclusion, one that is going to protect the farmers, not the one that's going to cut them to pieces. Allow that discussion to take place. Allow that discussion to take place. Allow a time frame for it to happen. That, Mr. Speaker, is why closure at this point in time is not the right thing to do.

I want to point out a number of other things, Mr. Speaker, that I think are important in this discussion. The statement was made, when people cannot be heard, freedom, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is destroyed. When people cannot be heard, freedom, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is destroyed. What are those people in the court today saying? When the people cannot be heard, freedom, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is destroyed.

What are they saying in the court? Closure in the court — this Bill is closure in the court. We have closure in this Assembly for freedom of speech. We have closure in the court for people to be excluded from the court. Your rights are extinguished. That, Mr. Speaker, is what we're talking about — closure in the court, refuse access to the court.

(2200)

The member from Moose Jaw Palliser had a few things to say about this issue too. And I want to point out to the people here:

Mr. Speaker, this is a government afraid of words, afraid of words and afraid of ideas, afraid to let opposition MLAs, elected by their constituents to speak for them, do just that in these legislative chambers, the chambers of the people.

This is the Chamber of the people, and you put closure on. It's in the chamber of the court that you're putting closure on as well. And I hear no's, no's, no's. But what does it say? It extinguishes your rights — closure in the court, closure in this Assembly.

When are you going to quit? When are you going to quit? And who's next to get this closure placed on them? Who's next? Mr. Speaker, allow the people access in this Assembly. Allow people access in a court of law. What are you afraid of? Closure in the court.

Mr. Speaker, this member from Moose Jaw Palliser goes on to say:

This PC government with this motion has said formally and officially with their closure upon closure . . . they said, if you dare oppose us, if you dare to criticize us, if you dare to speak against us, we will eliminate your right to speak.

Now where is it eliminated, Mr. Speaker? It's being eliminated in this Assembly. And on top of that, it's being eliminated in the court. Mr. Speaker, that's where it's being eliminated. That's the fundamental reason why we're talking about it because closure is in the court. Closure is a part of the discussion, Mr. Speaker. Closure in the court. That's the reason why we're talking about this.

And the member from Moose Jaw Palliser goes on to say: And I say to this government, you don't need closure; what you need is a mandate.

Have you got a mandate to exclude people from the court? Have you got a mandate to do that? You've done it twice now — twice, Mr. Speaker — in less than a year. Twice, Mr. Speaker, we have had closure in this Assembly and closure in the court. Twice, twice you have extinguished the rights of individuals to appear in a court.

How many times are you going to force people into that kind of position? How many times? A closure in the court. Extinguish the right. No cause of action against — there cannot be. You can do anything you want. And you have a closure in the court. Which court is going to hear whether you are legitimate in what you're doing? Which court is going to hear that? And who is going to represent the people? Are you?

You were elected on October 21 to do that. Did you have a mandate, did you have a mandate to exclude people from their day in the court? I don't believe you did. I don't believe you did.

The member from Saskatoon Riversdale had a few things to say about closure, too, and I want to point them out.

. . . a government coming in and using the heavy hand of its majority and arbitrarily deciding in its opinion that the opposition's debate has been too long, in its opinion that our arguments have been irrelevant, in its opinion that we ought not to be talking about it.

They come here to define the rules of this legislature, to do this arbitrarily by simple majority, and to equate this kind of heavy-handed, undemocratic, unprecedented, unwarranted attack to the rules where all members agree . . .

Member from Regina Riversdale, August 4, 1989, three

years ago had that to say about closure. Mr. Speaker, the member for Riversdale, the attorney general at one time in this province, brought home to Canada the constitution and the Bill of Rights. And now we have closure in this House and closure in the court — closure in the court by a man who said that he was going to defend the rights of individuals because it was the right thing to do. He has said in this province that the day in court will be heard. The member from Rosetown-Elrose said twice yesterday, they will be heard. But what have we heard? They keep just down the track, hard, throttle wide open, heading for who knows what, destroying the people's rights to appear before court. And that, Mr. Speaker, is what the member from Riversdale is doing — leading this group to that end.

But I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, what this does show. This motion today shows this black Friday for democracy, this unprecedented attack on freedom in the province of Saskatchewan, maybe an attack on 26 lonely members of the opposition.

Twenty-six. We have ten.

And, Mr. Speaker, the necessity for us to speak about this in this case is even more right than the debate about this issue here. The issue that was being debated was not as significant as the one we're debating today, not nearly.

And I want to point that out to members in this Assembly because today we're witnessing a closure in this Assembly and a closure in court. Closure — allowing no one access, voiding information, extinguishing rights. No right for cause of action against, for anything. From 1991, on January 1 through to now, closure, Mr. Speaker.

... discredited and desperate, this government has no other choice. It resorts to the actions of a bully. It resorts to the actions of coming down and guillotining of the opposition right here.

Mr. Speaker, that's the Leader of the NDP Party, the Premier of the province of Saskatchewan, his observations about closure.

Mr. Speaker, I want to point out another couple of things that need to be said. I want to point out to this Assembly what the House Leader said for the Government of Saskatchewan, the member from Regina Elphinstone.

And then after the rule has been changed, they keep up the debate for a couple of weeks and find they're still losing in the opinion polls and in the minds of people of the province. And so what do they do then? Well then they say to the people of the province, we're not playing the game any more; we're not going to play any more. We got the most players; we chose the game that we're going to play, we pick the referee; we change the rules to our best advantage. And we still can't win, so we're going to quit playing.

And if I take a scenario of what happened in a debate about closure, here and in 1989, I would say that the member from Elphinstone is right on. You take the right to speak away. You don't want to play the game; you change the rules of the game, change your referee; you do

all kinds of different rules. So you get your own way. Fine. I can handle that. But what I can't handle, Mr. Speaker, is closure in a court. What I can't handle, Mr. Speaker, is closure in a place where people have the right — on a constitutional right basis — to be represented.

And they have the right to be there. They have the right, Mr. Speaker, to be there. And this Assembly is putting closure on that. And I don't think that that's right.

Mr. Speaker, there are other things that could be said. The member from Moose Jaw Wakamow felt very strongly about this issue. I respect him as an individual because he's a principled man, and yet when we come into this place and he changes sides, his principles vanish. Where are the principles? Where are the principles that should be stood on, on the basis of this issue and on the basis of other issues, Mr. Speaker? The issues are these.

And as he said in one of his remarks, Mr. Speaker, if a foreign power sought to limit the freedom of speech in Canada, we would fight them. We would fight them anywhere, Mr. Speaker. And that, Mr. Speaker, is what we're doing here today, talking about closure; talking about the involvement of the Minister of Agriculture and the member from Estevan in solving and resolving this problem. We have laid out, Mr. Speaker, over and over and over again, solutions to the impasse. But, Mr. Speaker, all we see is a hard, bent-over determination that goes harder and harder as each day passes. And, Mr. Speaker, that's what we have.

The member from Moose Jaw Wakamow says: if a foreign power sought to limit debate in this legislature, we would oppose that with all of the strength we could muster. Mr. Speaker, it's not happening from without; it's happening from within.

We have a government who seeks to limit the free speech of members in this legislature. That's no less reason, Mr. Speaker, for opposing this with all our strength.

And that, Mr. Speaker, is exactly what we're doing. Over and over again we have laid out to this Assembly why we believe that this government is in error. We have laid it out in different ways, and we're going to continue to lay that out before this Assembly in various approaches. We're going to lay it out in a systematic way so that the people of the province of Saskatchewan know that we are defending their rights.

Closure is a significant action in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker. Closure, restricting freedom of speech, is significant in this Assembly, but it's even more significant when rights are extinguished in a Bill before this Assembly so that those actions can never be taken to court. The actions of the government can never be taken to court.

And I want to put this in contrast. What would have happened, Mr. Speaker, if the farmers would have said, we want to change it? What would the government have done? If the farmers would have said we would change it, we want it changed, what would the government have done? Would they have taken the farmers to court for not paying their bills? You bet.

But where's the closure today, Mr. Speaker? Closure is here, yes, but closure is in a court of law. Closure is the extinguishment of rights in a civil action against the province of Saskatchewan. That's what the discussion is about. And that's what the discussion has always been: closure before a court of law. That is the reason, Mr. Speaker, we're opposing the government's actions on this Bill, and that's why I will be voting for this amendment and the subamendment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The division bells rang from 10:14 p.m. until 10:24 p.m.

Subamendment negated on the following recorded division.

Yeas — 9

Muirhead	Britton
Neudorf	Toth
Swenson	Goohsen
Boyd	D'Autremont
Martens	

Nays — 22

Van Mulligen	Sonntag
Wiens	Roy
Tchorzewski	Scott
Kowalsky	Kujawa
Carson	Crofford
Penner	Stanger
Koenker	Knezacek
Lorje	Keeping
Pringle	Renaud
Calvert	Langford
Johnson	Jess

The division bells rang from 10:26 p.m. until 10:37 p.m.

Amendment negated on the following recorded division.

Yeas — 9

Muirhead	Britton
Neudorf	Toth
Swenson	Goohsen
Boyd	D'Autremont
Martens	

Nays — 23

Van Mulligen	Sonntag
Wiens	Flavel
Tchorzewski	Roy
Lingenfelter	Scott
Kowalsky	Crofford
Carson	Stanger
Penner	Knezacek
Koenker	Keeping
Lorje	Renaud
Pringle	Langford
Calvert	Jess
Johnson	

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to again rise in the Assembly to speak on the main motion and speak to this motion before the Assembly regarding changes to the GRIP Bill and the farm insurance in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And I find it almost amazing that as I listened to the results of the vote, that if the opposition would have had even double the members, we would have been very close to upsetting the government at this time, Mr. Speaker.

But regardless, Mr. Speaker, that indicates the . . . one wonders if the support is beginning to dwindle on that side of the House to . . . support for the Agriculture minister in the front benches regarding GRIP, regarding the unilateral changes that have taken place in this Bill that have destroyed or are taking away the ability of individuals to proceed in the courts. As clause 10.1(2) says:

Every cause of action against the Crown or a Crown agent arising from, resulting from, or incidental to anything mentioned in clauses . . . is extinguished.

And then it also indicates in 10(3) that:

In any action or proceeding against the Crown or a Crown agent, a court shall not consider any principle of law or in equity that would require adequate, reasonable or any notice with respect to any amendments or changes to a revenue insurance contract to be provided by the corporation to any party to the contract.

Mr. Speaker, I find that and my colleagues find that to be a clause that we have grave difficulty with and we find it abhorrent that a government would even take that action in light of the fact that the government of the day are led by a Premier who was very sincere when he was part of the repatriation of the constitution, and spoke out very strongly, and fought for, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Mr. Speaker, the other day in this Assembly we asked the Justice minister if he would consider circumventing the normal process of the courts and allowing the GRIP Bill to proceed directly to the Court of Appeal because of the fact that we are informed and feel that we have substantial evidence that would indicate that this Bill may supersede or . . . not supersede, but may go against the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and certainly would affect the court case that is before the courts at the present time.

Mr. Speaker, I believe, in asking the Minister of Justice to go to the Appeal court, it would certainly speed up the process. And the government would then find out if indeed they have the legality or are in a legal position to bring forward the legislation in the position and in the manner they have.

And we again refer back to the debate in 1989 regarding the Boundaries Commission and the boundaries Act that was brought in at that time, and the opposition that was

raised regarding to the boundary changes, and the fact that a group took that to the court, went to the courts on the boundary changes, Mr. Speaker. And in order to speed up the process, the Justice minister of the day asked for the Court of Appeal to rule, and the Court of Appeal ruled. And then the process went directly to the Supreme Court of Canada for a quick ruling, because we all realized the necessity of the day was the impending election, and the fact that it would be very inappropriate for an election to be conducted on boundary changes which, if upheld . . . and if they weren't upheld in the court, then you'd have had to go on new boundary changes, and it would have been very expensive to the taxpayers of Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, the reason I raise that . . . And I want to take a couple of examples, recent examples where the Supreme Court ruled on section 7 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. And in one case it was a ruling in a case of *Pearlman versus the Manitoba Law Society* and the judicial committee. And the ruling was the indication . . . The Supreme Court came down and said:

The principles of fundamental justice to which this section refers include but are not limited to the rules of natural justice and the duty to act fairly. They therefore include the requirement of a procedurally fair hearing before a fair and impartial decision maker.

And I would indicate I don't believe that this Assembly is an impartial decision-maker to be implementing that kind of legislative changes.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to also refer to another decision from the Supreme Court regarding a challenge to the charter. This one comes from the Quebec Association of Protestant School Boards against the Attorney General of Quebec in 1982. It says:

The Government of Canada has an interest sufficient to permit it to intervene in an action for a declaration that a provincial statute is contrary to the charter, and therefore of no force or effect.

Provincial legislative authority is now limited by the rights conferred by the charter, and the question of conflict between the charter and a provincial law is not a matter solely of provincial interest.

(2245)

That would indicate to me, Mr. Speaker, it would also indicate to my colleagues that this government stands potentially to be . . . their GRIP legislation stands in a good position of potentially being struck down by the charter. Because I believe if the section 7 applies in those two cases that I've raised in this Assembly just now, Mr. Speaker, that they certainly could be raised with regards to the GRIP question and the legality of the government today and unilaterally changing legislation. They're bringing forward legislation that would change contracts, and in changing contracts work against or go against the basic freedoms and rights of individuals that our forefathers have fought for over the years.

And as my colleague from Morse indicated, some of his family were involved in the last great war, a war where people decided to stand up against oppression, the oppressive measures of a leader from Germany who felt it was his mandate to bring a clean and clear race to the world and decided that the only way to do that was to use oppressive means. Mr. Speaker, I believe we here in Canada and all the members who fought over the past number of years, not only in World War I and World War II . . . and even today we see the conflict that is taking place in Czechoslovakia, and sometimes, Mr. Speaker, many of us are very shocked at the way individuals would treat other human beings just to simply assert their rights.

And I believe we must continue to speak for the rights of individuals. Even individuals in this country, Mr. Speaker, who are guilty or have committed an offence are innocent until proven guilty. But the law protects them and gives them that fair day in court, that fair time for an impartial hearing before an impartial decision maker, and allows the process to decide whether an individual is indeed guilty or not.

So, Mr. Speaker, I believe as we continue the debate on the GRIP Bill, we will continue to bring this out that the feeling is there. And we've certainly been hearing from a number of legal minds who indicate, and individuals who are very familiar with constitutional law, that this certainly is another one of those cases which this Assembly must be aware of and be very careful with.

And I would recommend that the government, on any legislation they bring forward, take the time to test their legislation, take the time when they're drafting their legislation to see to it that that legislation is indeed in line with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. And I say that as the chairman of the Regulations Committee, Mr. Speaker, as the legal counsel to our committee has indicated that one of the areas that we are going to have to be very careful in and be very mindful of when we're reviewing Bills is the fact that addressing the fact of whether these Bills that we're reviewing, the Bills that have been passed in this Assembly, that we review before they're put in the gazette, Mr. Speaker, are indeed constitutional.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, as we look at the debate that has taken over for the past number of days, we see a number of principles that have been, Mr. Speaker, raised, a number of principles that have been raised that would indicate that certainly the GRIP Bill before us is something that I think, if the truth were known, many people and many individuals and possibly many on the government side of the House would wish they had never even entered into today.

There's no doubt in my mind that there are many people who would believe that if they had had the ability to do it all over again, they would certainly take another route.

Another question we raise and another reason we suggest the fact that this Bill before us may have a constitutional impact . . . Just take a look at page 1 of the Bill, Mr. Speaker, page 1 and almost half of page 2 — Bill No. 87, an Act respecting amendments to Certain Farm Income Insurance Legislation. And the Bill goes through a process

of whereas's:

WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly recognizes that farm income insurance programs should encourage good farming practices, provide reasonable protection to producers and be efficiently administered in the interests of Saskatchewan taxpayers and (Mr. Speaker);

WHEREAS the gross revenue insurance program was introduced in 1991 in advance of provincial legislation and a formal federal-provincial agreement; and

WHEREAS changes were made by the Government of Saskatchewan (Government of Saskatchewan and this program is a federal-provincial program but it says) to gross revenue insurance program contracts after March 15, 1991 and the time for producers to make decisions was extended to May 15, 1991;

WHEREAS the terms of revenue insurance contracts applicable for the 1991-92 crop year were never fully set out in an Act or regulations;

WHEREAS there are deficiencies in the original design and administration of the gross revenue insurance program;

WHEREAS, in accordance with the requirement in *The Agricultural Safety Net Act* to review and make recommendations with respect to the gross revenue insurance program, an independent advisory committee recommended changes to the program;

WHEREAS required parties to the federal-provincial agreement agreed, on March 12, 1992, to effect changes to the gross revenue insurance program and the Government of Saskatchewan immediately informed producers by making an announcement on March 13, 1992.

This announcement which the Crop Insurance deemed to have been made in accordance with the contract, although the contract read that changes should be made in the mail by letter to producers so they could have it in front of them and everybody would be informed at the same time.

WHEREAS the Government of Saskatchewan promptly undertook extensive measures to inform producers of the gross revenue insurance program applicable for the 1992-93 crop year;

WHEREAS in accordance with precedent set in 1991, the Government of Saskatchewan in 1992 extended the time for producers to make decisions under gross revenue insurance program contracts;

WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly recognizes that amendments to farm income insurance legislation are required to address the deficiencies mentioned above and to implement changes to the gross revenue insurance program;

THEREFORE HER MAJESTY, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows:

Mr. Speaker, that is an abundant number of whereas's that we have never seen before in legislation, and it would appear to us, Mr. Speaker, that the only reason for this long preamble to the Bill was an attempt by the government to try and explain the reasons for their tampering with and changing contracts and taking away the rights of individuals in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, there's no doubt — and we've indicated this before — that the whole debate over GRIP will not end here. It will not end when this debate in this Assembly eventually ends after the final process takes place on time allocation and the Bill may or may not become law. As, Mr. Speaker, we are aware, there is one more process once it goes through this Assembly that the debate must follow through, and it must receive Royal Assent.

But, Mr. Speaker, when we look at the GRIP legislation before us and we look at the 1991 GRIP program — and certainly more and more producers are becoming more . . . very acutely aware of the differences between the '91 and the '92 programs — Mr. Speaker, we find that there are many more people beginning to realize the impact that this '92 program is going to have on their individual farms.

And, Mr. Speaker, yes, we've all indicated that there are people and individuals in the agricultural field who have looked at the '92 program and will say and indicate that, well '92 isn't all that bad for me this year. But if you really follow and draw a map as to the areas where producers are somewhat in favour . . . more acceptable of the 1992 program, you will find it is areas where producers have had sufficient rainfall and are looking at substantial yields in their crop. And they look at the '92 program and say, you know that one isn't all that bad a program because even though I've got crop in the bins, even though my bins are full and running over, because it's an area pay-out on the revenue portion, I still have the potential of putting 15, 20, maybe \$30 an acre in my pocket depending what the price of grain does and depending what the production factor coming into play does. Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure that's what the intent of insurance programs were.

Now 1991 with all its faults, Mr. Speaker, 1991 put the insurance directly into the hands of those individuals who, through no fault of their own . . . such as we see in a number of areas in this province today, Mr. Speaker, because of drought. And who knows? The potential for severe frost damage to a major portion of the crop still exists, Mr. Speaker. And because of these factors, Mr. Speaker, people who do not have the crop in the bin are going to be left with very little. They'll have a little bit from their crop insurance, crop protection, and then whatever acreage payment that works out for their area . . . the same payment that the producer, their neighbour maybe down the road has when his bins are full and running over.

And I don't believe, Mr. Speaker, that that is the type of insurance program that the provincial government of

yesterday and the federal government agreed to and tried to work out. And maybe, and I'm not absolutely sure, but I don't think it's the type of insurance program that even many members on the government side of the House thought they were bringing into the province of Saskatchewan.

I think we all realistically want to look at ways and means of giving the rural community and agriculture in particular an ability to carry an insurance program that doesn't give them a pile of money or that they can just make money on, but can protect them through the bad years so that when they have the good years, the good years come along, Mr. Speaker, they can put aside. And they can continue to build and enhance their operations. But through insurance, by carrying insurance they're able to protect themselves from the dips in the cycle that we continually see take place in agriculture.

And we're all aware, Mr. Speaker, of the very disastrous effect and severe effect that a crop loss or price reductions or income in farm . . . farm income has in the field of agriculture — not only in agriculture, but in all of Saskatchewan, not only on the farms but in our small communities.

Take a look at Saskatchewan today, Mr. Speaker. Just take a look at the number of businesses that have folded up through the past year, year and a half, past two years, Mr. Speaker. Many of those businesses have folded up because of the lack of income and money in the hands of the agriculture producers across this province; money which, Mr. Speaker, flows into every sector of our economy; money which flows from the farmers' hands to the business persons' hands to the wage earners' hands and so on. It just continually revolves, Mr. Speaker.

And I think over the years we've all known that any time there's a dollar in a farmer's pocket, he probably generates 4 or \$5 in economic activity and spin-off in this province, whereas . . . I'm not certain, maybe the labour or the business community generates the same type of activity.

And if you were to talk to a business person around our province, if you were to talk to any of the professionals in our province, and I look at my constituency and many members can look at their constituencies, Mr. Speaker, they will find, you will find, that many of the nurses in our hospitals and many of the workers in our care homes and even many of the teachers in our schools, Mr. Speaker, have in a lot of cases come from farm backgrounds and continue to live in farm . . . or on farm backgrounds and their occupation is just a way of enhancing the farming operation by working together as a couple and a family. But there are many producers out there, Mr. Speaker, who would dearly love to be able to do it on their own.

And I also believe, Mr. Speaker, that there are people across this nation, people across this province, there are the wage earners out there, the high income wage earners, there are the low income, the minimum wage earners, many people who are becoming tired, Mr. Speaker, with the number of government subsidies and programs that are thrown at the farm community; and many farmers out there who are not impressed with third

line of defence.

As the Minister of Agriculture and the government would argue today it's about time the federal government came up with another third line of defence, a commitment to agriculture. And, Mr. Speaker, we can talk about a third line of defence but a third line of defence doesn't give any farmer the . . . And farmers are business people. It doesn't give them the ability whatsoever to legitimately sit down and make that business-type decision that they need to manage their farms, Mr. Speaker, and to plan for tomorrow.

Who's to say that the federal government, if they were to come up with the 500 million that the provincial government is asking for, when will that money finally find its way into the pockets of producers across this province? When more foreclosures have taken place, Mr. Speaker? That doesn't help the person whose bills are due today. That doesn't help the person whose bills are due and the interest rate is accruing and climbing, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we also find that a third line of defence doesn't address the real problem out there of stabilizing the farm economy. And as well, Mr. Speaker, one has to ask, if the Government of Saskatchewan is in such dire fiscal restraint and having such dire fiscal problems, Mr. Speaker, what about the Government of Canada? Are we just asking the Government of Canada now to pour in more money when they don't have . . . Basically they're looking at collecting money from not only taxpayers across the country but taxpayers living in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Order. It now being 11 o'clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow morning at 9 a.m.

The Assembly adjourned at 11 p.m.