

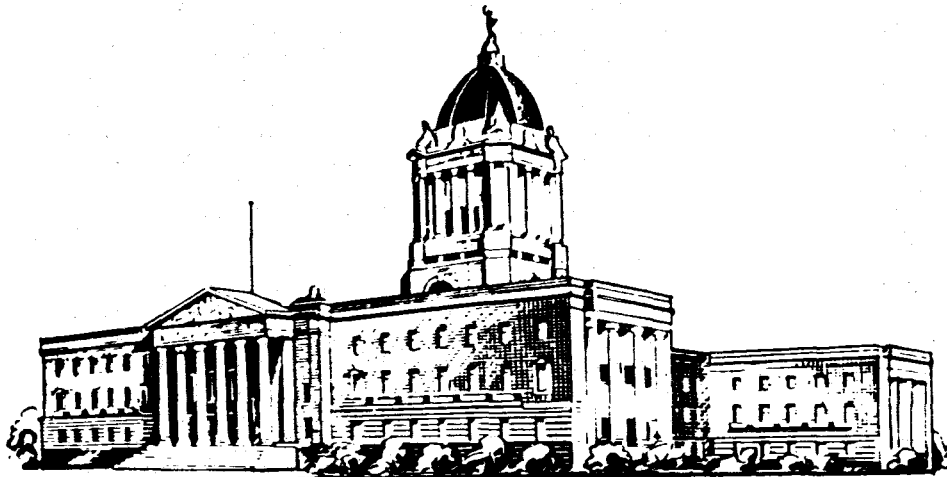


Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

Speaker

The Honourable Ben Hanuschak



Vol. XVII No. 32 8:00 p.m., Thursday, April 9th, 1970. Second Session, 29th Legislature.

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OSBORNE	Ian Turnbull	284 Wildwood Park, Winnipeg 19
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RIEL	Donald W. Craik	2 River Lane, Winnipeg 8
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ST. MATTHEWS	Wally Johannson	15 - 500 Burnell St., Winnipeg 10
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SPRINGFIELD	Hon. Rene E. Toupin	Legislative Bldg., Winnipeg 1
STURGEON CREEK	Frank Johnston	310 Overdale St., Winnipeg 12
SWAN RIVER	James H. Bilton	Swan River, Manitoba
THE PAS	Ron McBryde	56 Paul Ave., The Pas, Manitoba
THOMPSON	Hon. Joseph P. Borowski	Legislative Bldg., Winnipeg 1
TRANSCONA	Hon. Russell Paulley	Legislative Bldg., Winnipeg 1
VIRDEN	Morris McGregor	Kenton, Manitoba
WELLINGTON	Hon. Philip Petursson	Legislative Bldg., Winnipeg 1
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THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

8:00 o'clock, Thursday, April 9, 1970

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're on the Department of Agriculture. The Honourable Member for Emerson.

MR. GIRARD: Mr. Chairman, although it might seem that speaking on agriculture is a little remote for my past experience, I'd like to inform my fellow members that like the Member from -- (Interjection) -- where? St. George, I too once upon a time wore overalls, and although I might not be able to dish it out as fluently as the Minister, I'm sure it'll be just as weighty anyway. My area is an area that's taking in agriculture in several different ways. We have the wheat farmer and the beef farmer and the dairy farmer, and I'd like to just mention a brief note on the problems facing some of them that might not yet have been covered to my satisfaction. And that's what I'm waiting for, Sir, the solution.

First of all, we've spoken a great deal about the wheat problem. I've heard the Minister talk about it but I have yet to get a satisfactory explanation of what he thinks is the problem and what he thinks ought to be the solution. The world market, as far as I am told, in wheat, and the world trade in wheat has increased over the years, even recently has increased. The American world trade in wheat, the export sale has increased, but the Canadian wheat sales have decreased. I know that the Minister is under the impression that the Wheat Board is doing a good job. I was at the meeting last Saturday when the Wheat Board was applauded loudly, and as a matter of fact I was there when the statement that the Wheat Board ought to be applauded by all farmers was made, and I can't quite understand, Sir, why it is that if the Wheat Board has not succeeded or if the wheat problem exists, if the Wheat Board is at all responsible, why it is that an organization representing farmers ask that the Wheat Board be applauded. It seems to me that an organization that represents Saskatchewan and Alberta might well speak that way, but it seems to me also that in Manitoba we have, to some extent at least, a local market for wheat and it seems to me that it's quite possible that if Manitoba were to embark on a marketing mission of its own, that it could well be more satisfactory than our present system. Now I can understand that this means taking large steps. It might mean disassociating ourselves from the Wheat Board, but I just wonder if it's not worth considering.

Another statement that has been made by the Minister with regard to pricing was that the feed mills are setting prices, or the feed mill might be reflecting prices. I'm under the impression that in Manitoba approximately three or four percent of the total wheat production or feed grain production is purchased by feed mills. I think it would be unfair to accuse feed mills, who purchase such a small portion of the production, of contributing an unreasonable amount towards the decrease in wheat prices. In my own particular area we have a local market which means that our grain farmers, our feed producers can in fact sell to the local feed mill. I realize that the prices in that case might be a little lower than they'd like to see them, but at the same time I'm sure that these farmers might be happier to sell to the mill locally than be in competition through the Wheat Board with wheat farmers or feed farmers that are producing their grains in Alberta and Saskatchewan.

I mentioned at the last session that farmers need a little bit of security. We are today talking about changes in wheat prices. At the same time we are talking about changes in feed prices, and again at the same time we are encouraging farmers to diversify and go into areas of agriculture that will require large amounts of feed and large investment. I can understand the farmer being a little bewildered, considering going into an operation that will cost thousands of dollars and all his savings and then some indebtedness, when he knows well that there could be a fluctuation, a considerable fluctuation in the price of his feed that he will be buying as well as a considerable fluctuation in the price of his product and in fact very little security. So it's kind of a dangerous proposition for farmers who want to diversify at this time, very much like the dairy farmer who is relying to a large amount on subsidies which could be cut off at any moment at the whim of politicians.

I'm concerned a little bit as well with the attitude that the Minister has taken, on some occasions at least, of saying that the farmers' problems, and the wheat problem more specifically, are really federal matters. I can understand that they are and they have been in the past, but if we have a Minister of Agriculture in the Province of Manitoba, surely his responsibilities are to assume the problems that face the local farmers in Manitoba, and to slough it off by

(MR. GIRARD cont'd.) saying "It's a federal problem" is simply passing the buck and not assuming the responsibilities the way they should have been assumed. I don't pretend to think that there is any easy solution to the problem, but I think that we must be honest and face it squarely rather than pass it on.

I noticed in the report that he submitted, the report of his department, that we have quite a considerable number of highly qualified civil servants in your department, and I appreciate this and I don't for one moment say that this is not a good thing. I would like to see, however, that the concentration and the specialists, the emphasis be made so that there be investigation into the production of new crops, new - I noticed that in the report 10 new crops were listed - I would say that the emphasis should be on introducing more new crops that could be produced in Manitoba. I see that we have 35 highly qualified civil servants in soil testing and this area. I think we ought not to concentrate so much on the productivity of wheat but rather diversify in terms of crops and in terms of market specialization.

I'd like to point out also that the Agricultural Credit Corporation has been in function for a number of years and maybe to some degree with some success. I am highly in favour of making money available to farmers who want to diversify and farmers who want to go into business for the first time or expand or whatever; however, I'm not quite in agreement with the policies that have been laid down governing the loans that are made. I'm a little concerned that the loans are not equally available to all people in Manitoba. The requirements in order to obtain such loans are high and are therefore going towards already well established areas. I'm thinking when I say this, Mr. Minister, of southeastern Manitoba where we speak of the potential area in the cow-calf operation. Ironically as it may seem, we've always spoken about it as a "potential area" and it is in fact a potential area, but I think it needs a little bit of encouragement and if you check, Sir, through the loans that have been made, you will notice that there is a very scanty number in that area of the province where they should be concentrated, especially with the problems that we're facing now.

I'm a little jealous of course when I read of the ARDA and FRED programs in your department report, because I think again that that area of Manitoba that requires this kind of assistance and development has been neglected and overlooked. Of course I'm not placing the blame at you when I say this, but I simply feel that this is an important area that has been missed as far as those beneficial programs.

I'm happy to see that in your estimates you have made available some funds for Marketing Intelligence. I look forward to hearing more about this and I would very much like to get specific information with regard to Marketing Intelligence. This is an area of problems that we are facing today.

I have a specific question, if I may, Mr. Minister, and that is with regard to the Ag Rep that has retired just recently in the Vita area. Our people of that area are concerned about his retirement and his replacement and we are very eager to hear an announcement that he will be replaced by one or two as you may see fit.

Now if I may just digress for a moment, I'd like to say that in that area of the province we have an active Eastern Manitoba Development Corporation whose objective is to bring and develop industry wherever possible in southern and eastern Manitoba. We have very capable people working in this organization and for this organization, and I would like to commend what they have done this far. I noticed however, with a little bit of disappointment, that when they asked you to speak at their meeting, you gave them an anti-industrial development kind of speech, and I think that your effort in being a little political in that particular instance was both uncalled for and undesirable.

I would just like to quote, Mr. Minister, a few things that the Carillon News have reported about that particular incident. They say, and I quote: "The Agriculture Minister, Sam Uskiw, attacked the Churchill Forest Industries' agreement of '66 as assuring that the private sector, the four private companies involved in the development has nothing to lose but everything to gain. He explained that most of the money invested in the enterprise, more than 90 million in loans, has come from the Provincial Government." Now this is not quite fact, as I understand. The procedure is simply that the Provincial Government guarantees the loan. Maybe in some ways some people will think that that's equivalent, but I think that it gives a misleading kind of impression to the people of Manitoba when you say that the Government of Manitoba has paid them the money and you go ahead.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is the date of the publication?

MR. GIRARD: April 1st. Another quotation I would like to mention here, and I quote: "The Pas. To illustrate his views that Manitoba must" -- I'm sorry, I better start from the beginning. "The Minister used the development at The Pas to illustrate his view that Manitoba must take a very cautious approach to the question of attracting industry." There's no doubt about that, Sir, but in speaking to an industrial development corporation whose duty it is and whose purpose it is to bring about industry and industrial development, I think encouragement would be more fitting than telling them to take a very cautious approach.

To go a little further, he says: "Let's not be satisfied with just anything that comes along. If you have an over-abundance of low wage industries and have to give them substantial tax benefits, then your community may not be getting value for its investment." I agree with you again, Sir, but I think it's the wrong kind of thing to be telling a company or a corporation or a group whose objective is exactly opposite to this. I think that in view of the mounting unemployment situation, you might well want to retract some of these words in not too distant a future. However, this is entirely up to you.

On another vein, I am very much interested because of our lay of the land in southeastern Manitoba to the possibilities of fish farming that has been announced just recently, and although I was ruled out of order, Mr. Minister, I was quite sincere and curious when I asked the question of why it is necessary that we charge \$15.00 for registration fee. I know there must be a reason and it might be a very valid one, but I would be very interested to know what the purpose and the reasons are because I am sure that I will be asked the same question.

I was very interested in your comments with regard to your visit to Rome. I'm sure that when you deal in international affairs, and trade and commerce being a very important one at this time, and that you meet people of countries which you yourself have quoted, saying people of hungry areas, or people that represented countries where there is in fact hunger, it's quite strange that you would come back, Sir, from a convention of that kind and announce to the farmers of Manitoba that the federal policy, the federal policy of decreasing wheat production in Manitoba, is a step in the right direction. I can't help, Sir, but think that there's a bit of a contradiction there. I'm wondering - I'm wondering if the problems are in marketing. I don't know just exactly where the problems might lie, but somehow there seems to be a bit of a contradiction in your two statements.

I don't intend to be much longer. I am very much interested in the areas of agriculture and I would be very happy to hear your answers to the few questions I gave you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. BUD BOYCE (Winnipeg Centre): Mr. Chairman, in days of yore it used to be the policy when knights went into battle to gird their armour on to protect them from dragons and things like this, so I thought before I started, maybe if I protected myself from the slings and arrows of the outraged member from Morris, perhaps we could -- (Interjection) -- But I was interested in what the Member from Emerson had to say earlier in this Session when he was weeping crocodile tears to the Minister of Agriculture that he was the lone member to represent the farm community in the House. -- (Interjection) -- I'll dig you up chapter and verse later. But anyway, it comes to mind when people talk about wheat and wheat and wheat and wheat and wheat, we lose sight of the fact that we have in Manitoba and Western Canada the most efficient farmers in the world as far as production is concerned, so production is really not the problem. Marketing, as everybody will admit, is the problem, and I suggest that the Minister of Agriculture has a great depth to draw on on the members of this side in economics and in marketing.

The Member from Pembina -- (Interjection) -- there he goes - chirp, chirp, chirp. The Member from Pembina gave us his definition of an expert. As I have been under pressure, well I'll have to admit I never was a farmer, but I'm not under pressure that's for sure. As I mentioned in the last session, I was kind of an authority on heifer dust, but the Minister over here used a little stronger word, he calls it "bull".

But, Mr. Chairman, it always seems ludicrous to me - you know they call themselves Progressive Conservatives, and in the last 50 years I would suggest that they've had only one progressive, because some of the things that Dief did were good. The setting up of loans and things like that for agriculture, in my mind, were very progressive; in fact they were so progressive they were almost socialist. But everybody knows what happened to Dief. My member friend over there from Emerson said just a few moments ago about Marketing Intelligence. You know - and I really don't like to be part of this - I wish he could start, you know, like

(MR. BOYCE cont'd.). . . . today and say the heck with yesterday, let's work from here on.

A MEMBER: Everybody?

MR. BOYCE: Yes, but you won't let us; you keep harping on the same old story.

-- (Interjection) -- I better pay attention to this one and I better button up my jacket I guess

-- (Interjection) -- Well, Mr. Speaker, I must share this one with the members of the House. It says, "Bud, your fly is open." I'm scared to look. Personally, I think it's a dirty Conservative trick. I'll have to admit, Mr. Chairman, that. . . .

MR. WEIR: Get your hands out of your pockets.

MR. BOYCE: but it should be quite obvious that some of the members opposite have found my Achillean heel and how to defeat me in debate. I'm assured by my colleagues that everything's safe, that even if a bird dies it doesn't fall out of the cage so I don't have to worry about being embarrassed. You know, this is just a manifestation of the nervousness of some new members in this House as we try to make a contribution to the Legislature of Manitoba. Some of us are perhaps ignorant in some areas; some of us are naive in others; both of which I would suggest there are situations which can be corrected, but I would suggest that stupidity is a congenital malformation on which some members of the Party opposite have approached problems in the past in some areas perhaps. In sex, sin and psychology perhaps I am an authority, but we are not speaking of that at the moment.

The only reason I entered the debate, Mr. Chairman, was not in defence of the Minister of Agriculture but was primarily to assure my friend from Emerson and our friend from Morris and Rock Lake that this government fully believes in participatory democracy, and the backbenchers within the parliamentary procedure that we function under, they have probably more to do than in any other Session of the Legislature, because all the backbench over here is involved and many of them are considering the problems of agriculture. Some of my members opposite regret that the events didn't allow for the sitting of the Committee of the House on Agriculture, and I'm certainly looking forward to becoming involved with it and hearing some of the opinions from members opposite because I for one believe with the member from Ste. Rose that a good idea should be threshed out on the merit of that idea regardless of which side of the House it comes from, and I see little benefit in agriculture or any other estimate or any other debate for us to sit here and deride each other. You keep saying that we haven't got a plan - we haven't got a plan. Well, I've been looking at the Order Paper for the last few days and, you know, if you're honest about it, what legislation has been allowed to progress - because we're bogged down in other details - and I really don't want to bring it up because I don't think it does us any good. -- (Interjection) -- How many Ministers make statements.

MRS. INEZ TRUEMAN (Fort Rouge): . . . use up the time.

MR. BOYCE: I can't quite hear the member for -- Did you want to ask a question?

MRS. TRUEMAN: Mr. Chairman, I thought perhaps the gentleman speaking was able to hear me, but a great deal of the time in the afternoons is taken up not just with opposition business but also reports from Ministers, and quite often we agree we don't get around to the business till four or even five o'clock.

MR. WEIR: Sam's an expert on it.

MR. BOYCE: Yes, I guess so, on some occasions. Perhaps we have been guilty, but I would suggest in a lot of cases it's not without provocation. My friend from Lakeside here is a good provocateur, and in fact the way he's sitting quietly with his back to me, you can see the gears going, he's plotting up the next one.

MR. ENNS: That's not fair.

MR. BOYCE: I can almost foresee what it's going to be. -- (Interjection) -- No, it's better when the back of your head is to me, I can't see through the front. I don't want to prolong this -- I like to defend myself against ploys such as this, but I repeat what I said just a moment ago, that the Minister of Agriculture has more depth to draw from on this side of the House than any other government in the history of Manitoba.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. BARKMAN: Mr. Chairman, having checked my clothes, I thought I should perhaps get up for a few minutes and say a few words. I would like to welcome the Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre first of all to the Agriculture Committee and also to the contribution that he made. I don't think he's necessarily so very far out as far as adding a little psychology to the matter; I think this is quite in order and I believe this has to be done in the Agriculture Department or anywhere. I would like to just refer and say a few words in regards to that

(MR. BARKMAN cont'd.). . . beautiful southeastern Manitoba, as the Honourable Member for Emerson has just pointed out, although he's done such a capable job perhaps I could leave it at this time. I don't have to tell him nor the Minister that I think together we could perhaps say a few words about our feed mills in that area. I think I have about 15 or 16 in the constituency of La Verendrye.

I was also a bit confused with all the speeches we've had over the last couple of days and the continual argument that the Federal Government is at fault. And I'm certainly not here to protect any Federal Government, I think a lot of our complaints ought to be directed that way. I'm not just sure if I should congratulate the former Minister of Agriculture when he says that he perhaps did quite a few big things in the City of Vancouver, or the Member for Rock Lake, I don't know whether he went along or not, although I hear the real depth of the truth of the story is that a good constituent of Rock Lake, a fellow by the name of Mr. Joe Shanell, found out about quite a few of these problems in that area. If this is true I don't know, but it doesn't matter as long as something is being done about it.

I got quite a kick out of the discussion of the Minister's trip to Rome, and if that was worthwhile, I'm happy to hear that he went. But I think if he can create as much business, that I thought for a while that he was trying to intimate, by making a phone call, I hope he keeps on using that phone 'til some of this wheat goes down a little bit. Just keep on phoning please - just keep on phoning please. The honourable. . . .

MR. WATT: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Honourable Member for La Verendrye would permit a question at this time. Could the member find out from the Minister of Agriculture for me if he was speaking for the farmers in Manitoba or Saskatchewan and Alberta when he was conferring with Vancouver? I can't get any direct answers out of him so I ask the Honourable Minister if he will see if he can find that out.

MR. BARKMAN: Well I gather that former ministers and present ministers may have certain things in common. Perhaps you were both trying to represent as many countries as possible when you went. However, as far as the statement made by the former Minister concerning the position of the U. S., I certainly agree with him as far as our coarse grain situation is concerned and I think there's no question in anybody's mind that they got much more money than any other country has, but as far as their export in hard wheat is concerned, I don't know. My figures may be wrong, but I don't think it's quite as rosy as the honourable member pointed out, because in the 1968-69 figures in the world export that I have over here, the figures as far as Canada were concerned from the 1965-66 period when they exported 14.8 million tons and went down in 1968-69 to 8.0 million tons, the U. S. in the meantime, while they were exporting more in 1965-66, an amount of 23.4 million tons, they also went down to 14.6 million tons, and I believe that Australia is perhaps one of the only ones that stayed more or less constant. Although I don't think it is a matter of us trying to argue figures here, I just thought I'd like to bring this up because I believe that Russia, or U.S.S.R. was perhaps the only one that really picked up some exporting business and perhaps this mostly was because of the trade between communistic countries.

Mr. Chairman, I think we can talk ourselves blue in the face as far as Ottawa is concerned and perhaps maybe we should move our Committee over to Ottawa for a while, I don't know, but I think we have a problem that we should be discussing and probably stay also at home base. I'm not at all suggesting not to blame Ottawa, this is fine if there are reasons, but let's solve our own problems over here first. I think after we get this report from the Task Force -- I believe in this instance the department is going in the right direction when they ask their local agricultural representatives to hold meetings with the farmers, to hold meetings with the producer. I believe we're going to get more answers directly from the farmer than we're going to get from some of the fellows in Ottawa or perhaps from some sources that we cannot really control.

I just wish to add, Mr. Chairman, the Minister mentioned the other day that more than likely we would be trying, or the new policy would be based on two different policies, one to take care of the existing small farmer whose farm will more than likely not continue after he quits because his son or sons have either moved out or he has to quit because of his age. These people very often are the victims of rapid changes in the new techniques that have been taking place, but I agree, I think that certainly this government must give them the deserving attention to permit them to continue the life that they really loved so much at least as long as possible. I don't think that we should take this for granted.

(MR. BARKMAN cont'd.)

However, on the other hand, I cannot quite agree with the Minister when he feels that as far as our university aid and most of the other aid should perhaps be directed more only to the small farmers. I think we have to face the fact in today's world, with an ever-changing market, with our sales being more on a nation basis, I think we have to look at the other side also. In fact I thought for a while this afternoon that if we might not reach our Industry and Commerce estimates, perhaps we got a little bit of it this afternoon. I had agreed partly with the Honourable Member for River Heights although I don't exactly agree with him on certain points.

I'd like to come back to the fact - and I don't think I have to reiterate because certainly it's a fact that has to be taken into consideration - when we start thinking of the larger type of farms, and whether we want to use the large farm unit name or whether we want to use the family partner name or whatever name we wish to use, I think this is an area that we'll have to perhaps, not with subsidy so much but perhaps study more than even some of the other areas, because this is the future - this is the future of our young farmers of Manitoba. And I think that I'd like to suggest strongly to the Minister, Mr. Chairman, that we've got to - we've got to stay on a flexible but modern policy as far as agriculture is concerned. And I think we could go in quite deeply in this. I believe enough has been said on this.

At the same time, I think we've got to look in a constructive way as far as health is concerned in building up and alleviating some of the problems that occur today. I think something can be done about this; I think some of our young people are ready to accept these changes and we've got to go with them. We can't just take the attitude that we're only going to help one group of people. I believe in this area, a point that has not been stressed too much in the estimates, we could say a lot about our conservation programs, we could say a lot about our drainage problems, and perhaps not in the Minister's area right now, but I think he knows and we all know that these departments at times are not working close enough. There is nothing wrong with an Industry and Commerce Department working with the Agriculture Department; likewise the Drainage Department with the Agriculture Department.

So I think, Mr. Chairman, that one of our greatest assets as far as farming is concerned is still our energetic youth and we must be willing to help them. -- (Interjection) -- You have? Very good. I think perhaps I'd like to -- maybe I could do this later -- I'm very interested to hear more about our veterinarian clinics. I know that southeastern Manitoba, I believe there will be one located in the Honourable Member of Emerson's constituency. I want to plead at this time, although I think I can bring it up under Veterinary Services, that I come from an area where perhaps the animal population whether it be hogs, dairy or not so much in the beef line or whether it be poultry or otherwise, I think it's the heaviest populated area in Manitoba. I hope that while these clinics are being picked in more so-called depressed areas, I think we have a problem there with the very heavy population of agriculture whether it be poultry, hogs or dairy cattle, I think while it may not be called a depressed area we are depressed as far as our veterinary services are concerned. We have just one doctor in that whole area -- the Honourable Member for St. George says in the whole province. I agree -- but I believe the nine or so that are supposed to be located and built this first year I think will hardly cover the whole province. However, I'm sure we'll hear more about this and possibly discuss it further when we get to Veterinary Services estimates.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. WATT: Mr. Chairman, I don't want to hold up the discussion on the Minister's salary. I want to point out first to members of the committee, Mr. Chairman, that I'm not too worried about my wearing apparel because I'm quite secure in Stanfield's underwear. I'm sure if my honourable friends, members across the way wore them they wouldn't be worried either.

I want to just make a few comments, Mr. Chairman, and first I want to comment on the Minister's statement on crop insurance which I still didn't get a clear answer from him on the rates so that we would be able to compare that with what we were paying last year and what we may be paying under a government plan this year, but I point out to the Minister that I rather suspect that the plan that was on his desk for him to look at may be somewhat similar to what he will be introducing by way of bill some time during this session.

I want to make just a brief comment on the increase in coverage to certain farmers throughout the province, that is those farmers who are considered to be following improved practises. I say, of course, to the Minister that I'm happy to see that he is extending this program throughout the province, a program that was instituted, of course, when I was Minister of Agriculture, on a test basis in the Carman area and I'm happy to hear him say that it

(MR. WATT cont'd.). . . . worked out very successfully in that area and is now a presentable program to the rest of the province. But I do point out to the Minister and I think you will agree with me that it will be somewhat difficult this year for too many farmers to participate in this increased coverage program because of the cost of fertilizers and I believe that fertilizers are the main issue actually, it's the main string that is attached to the program. If you take a look, Mr. Chairman, at the recommended rates of fertilizers that are coming from the University of Manitoba, and I don't quarrel with them on the rates they recommend, I think you'll find that they're pretty high in a fairly large area in the Province of Manitoba and sometimes the cost of fertilizer becomes almost prohibitive and particularly this year with the short cash situation that we have in the agricultural area and particularly in view of the fact that many farmers still have not paid off their last year's fertilizer costs. However, I think that it is a step in the right direction and I'm sure that when we recover, and I'm sure that we will recover, from the recession that we are in in the agricultural community at the moment, I must say of course that I have to now come to the conclusion that the Minister of Agriculture is not offering us too much in this direction although he may after I get finished speaking tonight.

In the area of Veterinary Services, again I say, and as I pointed out before, that I believe the Minister is presenting a program of veterinary services throughout the province that will, at least to some extent, alleviate the problems that we have in our veterinary areas and I await with interest to see the full details of how this will apply. I asked the Minister the question if he foresees that technicians will be licensed that they may be able to work in conjunction with our veterinary services throughout the province, in conjunction with these clinics that will be set up. I believe he said, or his statement was to the effect that nine would go into effect shortly. I think it's a good program and I want to congratulate the Minister on his announcement on this particular area. There are other areas that I could talk about, Mr. Chairman, but I have taken up quite a bit of the time of the committee so far, not as much time as the Minister has himself of course in his extensive answers or attempts to answer or to evade questions that we have posed to him on that side of the house.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to go back of course and discuss for a few minutes the immediate problems in agriculture and I do so at the risk of being called to order because of repetition. And I can appreciate

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would remind the member that he's at liberty to do so but we've debated some of these topics three or four times already.

MR. WATT: I thank you, Mr. Chairman. When I sat in your position in that Chair I remember the problems I had with particularly members of the Socialist Party in the area of repetition and I appreciate your position.

But I want to talk for a few minutes, Mr. Chairman, about the government's position in respect to the federal wheat reduction program again, and I think this is about the fourth or fifth time during this session that I've got on my feet to talk about this, about the Minister's position and about the First Minister's position. And I'm sorry that he is not in his chair tonight, I'm sorry that I have not seen him in the House during the Agricultural estimates. I agree of course that the First Minister is a very busy man but I had hoped that he would be here tonight to see the estimates of the Minister of Agriculture finally come to an end and that we vote the money to the department. Whether we vote the money to the Minister in the form of salary is something that we'll have to consider as the evening goes on.

But I want to talk for a few minutes about the position of the Minister and to say again that I cannot seem to get an answer from him where he stands and where the -- oh, I'm happy to see the First Minister just coming in. Probably I could just stop and take a drink of water 'til he gets to his seat, Mr. Chairman, because I want to direct a few remarks to him. I want to go back some time, Mr. Chairman, before the Federal Government announced their policy in respect of the wheat problem in Manitoba and Western Canada, and I have before me a clipping from the Winnipeg Free Press dated February 18th. The headline is: "Stop-Gap Ready - Uskiw." The statement goes on to say, "the Manitoba Government is prepared to provide \$12 million in its own program in cash advances to the farmers with grain in storage. Agricultural Minister Sam Uskiw of Manitoba said here today in Ottawa." Twelve million dollars, Mr. Chairman. Now I don't seem to have the clipping at hand at the moment but I believe that the First Minister did make the same statement, I believe at Russell, or in Manitoba in any event, to the same effect that the Provincial Government of Manitoba, provided that no policy was forthcoming from the Federal Government, would be prepared to put into the hands

(MR. WATT cont'd.) of the farmers in the form of cash advances in excess of ten or up to twelve million dollars. And I say hallelujah, Mr. Chairman, because when I saw this statement I thought it was a good move on the part of the provincial government. We, as Tories, have always agreed with the principle of cash advances. In fact it was instituted in the Federal House some years ago by a Tory Government. And at that time in spite of opposition from the Liberal Party at that time it has been followed as a policy since that time and has been increased and upgraded to the point we were at present as farmers receiving a maximum of \$6,000 in cash advances. I don't like to use the word "cash advance" because as far as I'm concerned it is simply buying wheat on the farm. Most farmers now are taking out the so-called cash advance, their grain is held in store until the provincial government has provided a quota for them to deliver and half the amount of the value of that quota goes to recover the advanced monies. So I was interested, Mr. Chairman, in this policy that was agreed to apparently or instituted or was prepared for institution by the now present Government of Manitoba. And as I read the releases I was quite aware that it would be subject to whatever policy the Federal Government might come out with.

Subsequently, Mr. Chairman, the Federal Government did come forward with a policy which we've heard much about in this House in the past month and outside of this House. And I want to read into the record, again from the Winnipeg Free Press on February 28th, this is ten days later than the announcement by the Minister of Agriculture in Ottawa regarding cash advances, comments from the First Minister in Manitoba and I read, headlines: "Very Helpful, Schreyer. Premier Ed Schreyer of Manitoba said Friday the Federal Government's plan to pay farmers \$6.00 for every acre taken out of wheat production would be very helpful in easing the cash shortage crisis on the prairies. Further, the plan will help ease the critical economic situation many farmers are in." And further on. . .

MR. SCHREYER: I said it was helpful.

MR. WATT: Yes, well I can understand, Mr. Chairman. I'm reading from a press clipping. Further on: "Mr. Schreyer said the announcement program of acreage payments removes the urgency of any kind of supplementary cash advance for western farmers." Now, Mr. Chairman, what I have been trying to find out from the Minister, and I'm glad that the First Minister is in his seat tonight because probably I'll be able to make more headway with him than what I have with the Honourable Minister of Agriculture. I've been trying to find out from the Honourable Minister of Agriculture if his position is the same now as he stated at that time. I have read from the Free Press a clipping of February 28th regarding the statement of the First Minister, and I now read from the same February 28th issue of the Winnipeg Free Press, and I'm quoting the Honourable Minister of Agriculture as written by the Press: "We can look upon the new program as a sign of hope for western farmer." I repeat that, Mr. Chairman. "We can look upon the new program as a sign of hope for the western farmer, Mr. Uskiw told a press conference. I think our problems are beginning to be recognized."

Now I want to read further, Mr. Chairman, from today's Tribune, and I read a statement here attributed to the Minister of Agriculture: "Mr. Uskiw said that Manitoba is not in accord with federal policies regarding the acreage withdrawal scheme." Now, Mr. Chairman, I don't want to beleaguer this point or to take up the time of the committee, but surely the Minister is in a position tonight now, and if he is not maybe we can expect the First Minister to get up and say, is the first statement to the press correct? Is that their position today? Or is it today's announcement or statement that is attributed to the Minister the position that he is now taking? Last Saturday, Mr. Chairman, somewhat in excess of 2,000 farmers marched on the City of Winnipeg at a meeting sponsored by the National Farm Union. There were many farm union members at that meeting. There were many farmers there who happen to be associated with the Manitoba Stock Growers, the Farm Bureau. I would say that all segments of our agriculture were represented there in City Hall on Saturday afternoon, and to a man, Mr. Chairman, to a farmer, I don't believe that there was one person in that hall that agreed with the position the First Minister had taken on February 28th and the Minister of Agriculture. Not one man.

I am asking the First Minister now, or the Minister of Agriculture, if the statement in today's Press, April 9th, is a correct statement of the position that the Minister takes? If it is, then I want to ask the Minister of Agriculture or the First Minister, are they prepared to inject the \$12 million that was stated as policy to the press on February 28th; are they now prepared to inject \$12 million into agricultural economy in this province in the form of cash

(MR. WATT cont'd.). . . . advances? I think it's a fair question that demands a clear-cut answer here tonight. Now if the statement today in the Winnipeg Tribune is wrong and the statement by the First Minister and by the Minister of Agriculture on February 28th is correct, then I will have no alternative, Mr. Chairman, but to move the reduction of the Minister's salary; no alternative whatsoever, in spite of the fact that the Member for Lakeside, who spoke here a few days ago and practically made a pledge to that side of the House that we would not lower ourselves to this petty sort of thing that has been prevalent in this House over the ten years that I have been here for any little excuse at all, when those members were opposite and along with the Liberal party over there, constantly got up and made motions to reduce ministers' salaries.

But, Mr. Chairman, I am telling you today that we are talking about something a little bit more important than has ever been discussed here in this House when it came to motions to reduce ministers' salaries; we are talking about the future and about the fate of the farmers of Manitoba. I ask my honourable friends, whether it be the Minister of Agriculture or the First Minister, to give us a clear-cut answer here tonight, do they favour the demands of the farm union and other organizations that were represented here last Saturday. I think I could ask this of every cabinet minister on that side of the House because I believe almost to a minister they were there at that meeting, almost.

MR. SCHREYER: Pretty close - half.

MR. WATT: Pretty close I think. I don't believe there were any back benchers there.

MR. SCHREYER: You were there.

MR. WATT: I was there that's right. I listened to the names being called out, I didn't see them all rise but I suppose that their names had been handed in, that they were there. So I am sure that there is no front bench on that side -- (Interjection) -- Walter was there -- there is no front bench on that side that is not. . . . must be in a position to stand up and say tonight, are you in favour?

The Minister of Cultural Affairs I believe he was there; the Minister of Finance was not there because there was \$10 million involved here and I can quite imagine that he was away figuring out where he might have to dig it up. I don't believe his name was called. I looked for him. So I think that any one of the front bench almost, excepting the Minister of Finance, should be in a position tonight to get up and say where they stand in respect to Federal policy as it applies to the Province of Manitoba. Now I'm just asking a very fair and simple question, Mr. Chairman, of the First Minister or the Minister of Agriculture or if they do not care to answer then - I have to skip the Minister of Finance because he's the one that is going to have to dig up the 10 or 12 million bucks, but I see the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources back there smiling quite happily; he's out of his seat right now but I wish he would come down and make a statement exactly where his position is or what his position is, relative to the Federal policy that in fact is - should I say this? - being shoved down our throats at the moment, being shoved down our throats at the moment.

I want to point out one thing to the Minister before I sit down. When the Minister of Agriculture from the Federal Government was here in Manitoba - was it yesterday? - and when I heard his voice over TV, pardon me, over radio, and I think this is confirmed that he did make the statement that all ministers of agriculture were in favour of the policy when they were asked to come to Ottawa and when the policy was announced to them. I think I am correct, he did say this, that's the way I heard it, and I've been told by people that I believe were knowledgeable in exactly what he did say, that all ministers were in favour of the plan at that time. So I'm going to sit down, Mr. Chairman, and I promise you, Mr. Chairman, that as far as the estimates are concerned, that I will hold up the estimates no further if I can get a clear statement from that side of the House what their position is tonight.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. USKIW: Members opposite that don't believe in doing a bit of research, that don't believe in checking what has been said for the record in this Chamber, that feel that they haven't the time to be bothered, to spend the time to be sure that they accurately represent or state the remarks of other members. I'm quite prepared to restate what has already been stated in the Chamber, but I want to say for my honourable friends opposite and in particular for the Member for Arthur, that I agree with him that there wasn't one member at that particular meeting at the auditorium that supported the Federal wheat inventory reduction program. Now when he said that he must have included all the members which he named that were present from this side of the House, so obviously, he's either not sure of what he is saying or

MR. USKIW cont'd.). . . he's contradicting himself, very substantially. Because if all members at the auditorium were opposed to the program, that would include those that were there and my honourable friend said all members were opposed. Now let me finish my point, - my point is. . .

MR. WATT: On a point of order - no, pardon me, no point of order, point of privilege. Point of privilege, Mr. Chairman.

If the honourable member had been listening to me, I was talking about the farmers that converged on Winnipeg last Saturday, the farmers.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't believe it's a privilege. Just seems to me an explanation.

MR. USKIW: I accept that, Mr. Chairman, but I want to remind my honourable friends since they were unanimously opposed to the program, and since, if they were under the impression as my honourable friend seems to insist that he is, that is that the government of Manitoba is supporting the program, then I'm surprised that they didn't make representation to the government of Manitoba on that day. Surely 3 or 4,000 farmers weren't misled like my honourable friend opposite is, because there was no representation made to this government on that particular subject matter, and I would assume, Mr. Chairman, that being in their presence that they would have caucused with me to ascertain my position if they were not sure of my position. -- (Interjection) -- Why didn't they? Because they are quite pleased with the position of the government of Manitoba on all matters related to agriculture. The only concern they have, Mr. Chairman, the only concern they expressed, one of the major concerns which they expressed, was the one dealing with the feed grains issue, and the fact of the matter is, Mr. Chairman, if you want to talk about what happened at that particular meeting, it's true to say that a member of this Assembly was singled out as being the one responsible for making a mess of the feed grains industry.

MR. WATT: Keep dodging?

MR. USKIW: My honourable friend says who's that. Well, I think for the record I might say that the accusation was made against the Honourable Member for Morris. Now I don't know whether that's true or not, Mr. Chairman. The only thing that I do know is when the changes were brought into effect, my honourable friend from Morris was then the assistant to the Minister of Agriculture for Canada, Alvin Hamilton.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Chairman, lest there be any doubt at all, let me just make this statement. I was the one that was responsible for bringing the matter before the agricultural committee; I was the one that had the agricultural committee called in order to discuss this matter and I take full responsibility - I still don't regret it, because I think it was the proper move then and I think it is the proper move today. And if my honourable friend can convince me that the change in the feed regulations at that time has contributed in any way to the deterioration of prices on feed grains I invite him to do so. But I know he can't. I know he can't, because it is just simply not a fact.

MR. USKIW: Well anyway at least we have established one thing, that is that my honourable friend does admit some responsibility.

MR. JORGENSEN: How many times do I have to tell you?

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, about a week ago, shortly after I arrived from Ottawa, I, for the purposes of the record of this House. . . .

MR. JORGENSEN: Deal with this question - how the feed grain prices have deteriorated because of the change in regulations? Deal with it. I'd like to hear your comments.

MR. USKIW: We have a whole hour, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I believe the Minister has the floor.

MR. JORGENSEN: I wish he'd use it properly.

MR. USKIW: When I returned from Ottawa, Mr. Chairman, I was asked a question in the House, to which I responded with a very lengthy statement, as to what Manitoba's position was with respect to the wheat inventory reduction program. And if my honourable friends are too lazy to read that statement then I'm going to repeat it, because I still have a copy of it - a number of copies. Read it all? All right: "Summary of Uskiw-Lang discussion on the wheat inventory reduction program, Ottawa March 31, 1970 -- (Interjection) -- from my working paper of that particular meeting, and I'm going to make the same points that I made in response to a question from that side of the House.

MR. WATT: Mr. Chairman, did I understand the Minister to say a moment ago, if I may ask a question, did he say he was going to read from the record? Is that the record?

MR. USKIW: May I quote, Mr. Chairman? "The major points and questions put forward by Mr. Uskiw were as follows: Indicated that the objective of reducing wheat inventory to a more manageable level is a sound one. Major question as to whether program as presently designed will achieve that objective. Indications from farmers in Manitoba are that there will be little response to the program. Main reasons are: (a) \$6.00 per acre incentive is not sufficient to induce farmers to summerfallow. It barely covers costs; (b) farmers in Manitoba had already made major reductions in wheat and summerfallow acreage increased in 1969. Reduction in wheat 26 percent, increase in summerfallow 19 percent. No. 3 Expressed concern over how equitable the program was for Manitoba in relation to Saskatchewan and Alberta. Noted comparative adjustments that had taken place in 1968 to 1969" -- and I will read the same figures which I read to you about a week ago.

I hope my honourable friend listens very carefully. Wheat reduction 1968-69 Manitoba 26 percent, Saskatchewan 13 percent, Alberta 18 percent. Summerfallow increase, Manitoba 19 percent, Saskatchewan 7 percent, Alberta 6 percent. That, Mr. Chairman, indicates that Manitoba did make a major adjustment in its program last year voluntarily without any compensation. Because Manitoba has made the largest adjustment this reduced the potential for Manitoba farmers to make further adjustments and means that Manitoba's share of the quota base for marketing wheat this year will be disproportionately affected. Item No. 4. Expressed concern over removal of the unit quota system because of its effect on smaller farmers. If this special delivery provision is to be removed, it should be replaced with other programs to take care of small farm income problems. No. 5. Expressed concern over the fact that farmers have been asked to respond to a one-year program without any knowledge of what situation they will face next year and in the longer run. No. 6. Propose that if the federal government is serious about achieving a major reduction in wheat inventories it should raise the incentive payments for reducing wheat acreage from \$6 to \$12 per acre. No. 7. Propose that in order to qualify for the incentive payment, that farmers should be permitted to use either 1968 or 1969 as a base year rather than having to use 1969 as it now specifies. This would give more equitable consideration to those individuals and regions who have made their major acreage adjustments in 1969. Also propose that in order to get quota to sell wheat that at least 50 percent of last year's summerfallow acreage rather than 25 percent should be permitted. Now this is the same statement which I made to the House about a week ago; and I indicated to members opposite a week ago that we were in the midst of negotiations with the Federal Government to try and improve the program or to try and develop some kind of a program for the prairies which would be reasonable for the farmer to accept. As late as is it yesterday? -- I believe it was yesterday, this position was again put to the Minister of Agriculture for Canada, the Honourable Bud Olson, at the International Airport, and again we had a discussion as to whether or not Ottawa was prepared to adopt a more flexible approach in any program that they may devise to bring about a better balance between production and marketing.

I don't know at this stage, I'm not sure, that Ottawa is prepared to be that flexible. My inclination is that they are not, and if they are not, it's obvious that it isn't in the cards for Manitoba to (a) participate in the program; (b) benefit from it in any substantial way even if they do participate. And therefore there is no way in which one can interpret the Government of Manitoba's position as being in favour of that program as it exists. Now if they are prepared to be flexible surely it's reasonable for us to enter into further negotiations to try and amend their proposals so that they indeed are beneficial to the province of Manitoba, and indeed programs which we will be quite willing to accept. And in the absence of that, Mr. Chairman, we cannot undertake to accept the kind of program that has been offered. It just isn't workable as far as the Province of Manitoba is concerned.

Now I intend to further communicate with the Government of Canada and make our position quite clear, quite clear, because it is true that because of the fact that we have had a series of negotiations with the Federal Government, that the government interprets that to mean that we are willing to consider their proposal and the fact is that they have made statements that we are to some degree endorsing it. As a matter of fact, even Phil Reimer decided to jump on the band wagon yesterday. Oh yes, he thinks my name is quite popular, so he said if I agree with it then it must be good. Well nevertheless, Mr. Chairman, I care not what the....

MR. JORGENSEN: When did he get on that band wagon? It wasn't on February 28th.

MR. USKIW: February 28th - what's February 28th?

MR. JORGENSON: The day you issued the statement about how much you were in favour of it.

MR. USKIW: I have never issued a statement that I was in favour of the proposals that were brought forward by the Federal Government on wheat inventory reduction. . . .

MR. JORGENSON: You should read our own press releases.

MR. USKIW: and as I pointed out one moment ago, one moment ago, and I'll repeat it once more, that the objective of reducing wheat inventories to a more manageable level is a sound one; major question as to whether the program as presently designed will achieve that objective, and therefore the recommendations contained in this particular submission.

Mr. Chairman, I want to say that we are not happy with the program because it does nothing for Manitoba. It in fact hurts the producers of Manitoba if that program isn't altered, because it takes away from them the right to market a product if they produce it, and it doesn't give them any consideration for the fact that they made their adjustment last year and that they are not essentially in the same surplus problem as are the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta.

Manitoba's inventories are not unmanageable if you look at it on a provincial basis. We have or will have approximately one year's supply of wheat on hand by the end of July, and it is the intent of the Federal Government, as I understand it, to bring about a reduction of wheat inventory to a level of one year's supply. So my answer is that the surplus is elsewhere, it's not in the Province of Manitoba. We made our major cutback; we don't have the surplus that they're talking about and we should not be paying the penalty for the cure which they are trying to impose for the prairie provinces. If you analyze our position, Mr. Chairman, you will find here that the sum total of our proposals are that if they were to accept them, if the Federal Government were to accept these proposals, that their payments to the prairies would be in the order of 300 million dollars if the program was successful, 300 million dollars. My honourable friends opposite made mention of the fact that the Farm Union people demanded some payment of 300 million dollars, or 300 and some odd. It just happens to be coincidental. But this is what it would mean, this is exactly what this program would mean if it was amended to include the recommendations which we have proposed as a one year shot.

Now I think I have to remind my honourable friends opposite that I did indicate to the House that the Government of Canada implied very strongly that this was an interim measure, there will be other measures introduced subsequently, there may be measures introduced very soon which we know not of. The problem is, and this position I have taken with the Government of Canada, that I can't accept a pig in a poke; I can't accept the statement from the Government of Canada that you have to trust us for a few more months until we tell you what the other steps are going to be. They may have good intentions, I don't know. I don't know. They may have good intentions. We did have a good discussion, a friendly discussion. But I did indicate to members in Ottawa that it was rather impossible for the Government of Manitoba to give them a blank cheque without having some knowledge of what they intend to do in the future in the form of adjustments and so forth in the industry. And I think until we have that kind of knowledge, and until we're called in to participate on program development, it's impossible for us to take a position, positive support of this kind of a proposal. So I think the pressures are there, I think we have to maintain them, we have to encourage Ottawa to consult more with the provinces before they develop their programs because the provinces can play a vital role. They have indicated to us that in the future they will more adequately consult with us in any new programs. I did express disappointment that we weren't in on this one, that we were simply summoned in and told that tomorrow this is going to be our announcement, we hope you react favourably. Now this is something that I would hope doesn't happen again because it's very difficult for a province to react to a suggestion that hopefully they would be supporting a program which they knew a little of and didn't have any participation in bringing it about.

So I hope that sets the record straight for my honourable friend from Arthur. I hope I don't have to repeat this tomorrow again. If he wants me to I shall take the time to do so; we have two hours or so or two and a half in the morning. But I'm sure my honourable friends on the left of the Official Opposition are getting tired of repetition.

It's a strange thing that the same questions aren't arriving from the Honourable Member from Rhineland. The members in the Liberal Party they are clear on my position, there's no doubt in their mind, or they would be insisting the same way as my honourable friend from Arthur.

April 9, 1970

767

MR. WATT: They've got friends in Ottawa.....

MR. USKIW: If my honourable friend can't comprehend, can't hear what I have to say when I address the Chamber that isn't my problem that is his problem. I sympathize with him.

MR. WATT: one thing tonight.

MR. USKIW: I sympathize with my honourable friend. But for the record, my honourable friend has insisted that I repeat it. I have repeated it. I hope that settles the problem, Mr. Chairman.

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MR. WATT: Mr. Chairman, now we're getting some place. I was happy to hear the Minister say tonight that the program, the federal program will do nothing for the farmers of Manitoba and that in fact it will do actually harm to some. And this is correct. If he had just come out and said this clearly on February 28th, and if he had clearly said it without the diversion that has been going on here ever since, there would have been no argument. So now I'd like to talk, Mr. Chairman, just for a moment to the First Minister . . .

MR. USKIW: Was that a question or a statement?

MR. WATT: Wait until I finish speaking.

MR. USKIW: . . . because I haven't completed my remarks, Mr. Chairman.

MR. WATT: Oh, I'm sorry, I thought you'd got out of the diversion and . . .

MR. USKIW: No, I hadn't completed my remarks, Mr. Chairman. My honourable friend listened to me five minutes ago, and I'm pleased that he interjected because he gave me an opportunity to respond again. I indicated to him that we didn't accept the program but we were prepared to negotiate the program, and now my honourable friend says that he wished that I would have acted in a negative way.

MR. WATT: . . . I'm not asking him to start all over again, I heard him perfectly clearly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let him finish and then you could interrupt and . . .

MR. USKIW: Now my honourable friend says he wished that I had acted in a negative way on some date which he has in his mind - I don't know. Now I know that he must feel certain that he can expect a government to act in a negative way when a proposal is put to them, a proposal that is out of the blue, hasn't been considered by this government up 'til that point, simply introduced and offered as a suggestion and an offer or a request for support. Now surely before a government can respond to any proposal of the Government of Canada one has to analyze that proposal; one has to analyze how that affects the province. And that does take a little bit of time, Mr. Chairman, and we did a very thorough analysis, and subsequent to that analysis we did make further representation to the Government of Canada that we were unhappy with it and hoped that they would amend their program so that we might somewhere fit in, that we might derive some benefits from the program without suffering the penalty that they are imposing.

So I think this was a reasonable approach, Mr. Chairman. If my honourable friends opposite want to horse around and waste the time of this Legislature, that's fine, but I think -- (Interjection) -- The same statement was made to you my friend when I arrived here from Ottawa, the very next day in answer to a question put by yourself, the same statement. The same statement was given to the newspapers and was printed. I'm sure you'll see it in all the weeklies this week, this very paper, and my honourable friend is the only one that doesn't know about it. Now I sympathize with my honourable friend being in the front row and not being able to comprehend what is going on. My honourable friend says he's alone too. Well, he has my sympathy.

Now, let's get down to more basic things. Members opposite raised the question, in fact the Honourable Member from Rhineland raised the question of Manitoba's submission to Ottawa - and this is a different submission, Mr. Chairman, let's get that straight because we've had a number of submissions, unlike what happened during the term of office of the previous administration - the submission to Ottawa that Manitoba made asking that the Government of Canada discontinue the P. F. A. A. program and asking that they inject further sums into the crop insurance program as an alternative. I want to say to the Member for Rhineland that Manitoba has really never benefited from P. F. A. A. and it's not in our interest to continue that program. If we can convince Ottawa to divert some monies into crop insurance to improve its performance, to offer a greater amount of support to that program by way of either reduction in premium or in increase in coverage, that that would be most desirable.

And the reason I say that, Mr. Chairman, is that I'm afraid that P. F. A. A. could be classified as a redundant program one of these years, and unless we get something else in its place, unless we make constructive proposals to make sure that Ottawa just doesn't slip away on us and just simply save themselves a few million dollars by the abandonment of what I consider to be a redundant program, that it is our responsibility, Mr. Chairman, to try and prod the Federal Government to move in this direction so that we would not lose out and so that we can improve our crop insurance program, so that if we have a disaster in the Province of Manitoba our farmers can more adequately get a return out of the insurance program which has some relationship to their financial needs. And if we can pursue this - and I would hope that I

(MR. USKIW cont'd) have the support of my honourable friend from Rhineland because I can appreciate he didn't really know the context in which we were pushing this idea - and after having explained it, I would hope, Mr. Chairman, that he would agree with me that this is a very sound proposal. I can appreciate that there are no explanations in that particular book.

Now the point that my honourable friend made was that crop insurance programs should be voluntary and I think he's right; I don't pretend to insist that they should be otherwise. The question of -- "not yet", my honourable friend says from Birtle-Russell. Well, I don't know. I think that my honourable friends opposite are bent on approaching very important problems in a very negative fashion, and that's their privilege to do so and I simply am not going to respond to that kind of thing beyond what is necessary. I think that perhaps members a little closer to my right here have a little more to contribute.

With respect to ARDA farm drainage programs, farm consolidation, the Member for Rhineland raised the question about what is implied in the farm consolidation program or the fact that we had requested the Government of Canada to not discontinue that program and that we shouldn't be bringing more land back into Crown ownership. I think that in answer to him I have to say, Mr. Chairman, that we have to get down to basic plan development of our province in the agricultural sector - in all sectors, but we're dealing with agriculture. We have to try to get away from this business of people locating in marginal areas where we know they will not be able to make a decent standard of living. We must not perpetuate that; we must try to curtail it and try to reduce it, because we have a lot of people in rural Manitoba that are not earning the kind of incomes that you and I would consider reasonable to provide a decent standard of living for their families, and it is desirable that through land adjustment programs, human development programs, social development programs, that we attempt in the strongest way to try and bring about these kind of adjustments that will develop more fully the human potential that we have in the Province of Manitoba and to develop a greater productivity from that human potential that we have.

It's not unreasonable to bring back into Crown ownership lands that really have nothing to offer for the individual, for the private individual. I think some of them would be happy to be relieved of the ownership of this property if they were compensated in some way to make a decent adjustment in their living, and I think we ought to push the Federal Government as strongly as we can to get further federal involvement and more federal funds towards these kind of adjustment programs. There is no point in allowing the people of Manitoba to continue to settle on areas which have a real marginal capacity to produce, and the sooner we attack this program, Mr. Chairman, the better off for the province of Manitoba. And I am interested in what the recommendations are in the Task Force Report and I have an inclination that those recommendations will have a lot of bearing on this particular subject matter. I would hope that when that report is made public, when we have copies of it, that we can entertain the idea of negotiating with the Government of Canada programs that may be recommended in that program where it implies some major land and social adjustments.

I might point out on that subject, Mr. Chairman, it's my understanding that very soon Ottawa is going to be prepared to enter into another ARDA type of agreement with the Province of Manitoba and that indeed it will be very interesting to see in what context this new agreement is going to be, whether or not we are going to have a long-term proposal which is going to very slowly phase in land adjustment and social adjustment or whether we're going to have somewhat of a crash program effort into getting people into better economic position in rural Manitoba. And in that connection, I think I made some mention of it, we do have an item in the estimates this year which has to deal with social development in Agro Manitoba and we are determined to proceed in that direction, to try and help people find a better life for themselves and a better standard of living for their families.

Now, the question of cash advances was raised by the Member for Arthur. He wants to know just what Manitoba's proposal was and whether we are prepared to go along with it.

MR. WATT: I know what it was.

MR. USKIW: Oh, you know what it was. I see. I'm not sure that you do, because having listened to you a few moments ago and recognizing the fact that only this afternoon . . .

MR. WATT: Never mind the diversion, just give us an answer.

MR. USKIW: . . . I think I dealt with this subject at some length, and to have it introduced again, I'm not sure that my honourable friend opposite really understood what I was saying.

MR. WATT: Maybe you'd let the First Minister answer it.

MR. USKIW: So I'm going to outline again what Manitoba's proposal was . . .

MR. WATT: Mr. Speaker, on a point of privilege . . .

MR. JORGENSEN: I rise on a point of order. It seems clearly obvious what . . .

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order.

MR. JORGENSEN: I'm on a point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. SCHREYER: I'm on a point of order as well.

MR. JORGENSEN: Well I rose first on a point of order and you have no more right in this House than I have.

MR. SCHREYER: The Member for Arthur rose on a point of privilege and my honourable friend should know that a point of privilege has precedence over a point of order. So, Mr. Chairman, I ask you to recognize the honourable member who rose on a point of privilege.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Chairman, I rise . . .

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Chairman, there's a point of privilege and a point of order.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Chairman, my point of order is simply that . . .

MR. SCHREYER: Well, Mr. Chairman, does a point of privilege not take precedence over a point of order?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'll have to consult my adviser. The point of privilege is first. The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. WATT: Then, Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the First Minister.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is this a point of privilege or a point of . . .

MR. WATT: It's a point of privilege because the Minister of Agriculture is attempting to answer the question that I had directed to the First Minister.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well I'm not sure that's a point of privilege.

MR. WATT: Well, while you're making up your mind, I'd like to ask the First Minister the question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well I'm sorry, I think . . .

MR. WATT: I'd like to ask the amiable First Minister, while he has the equally amiable Minister of Finance beside him, if he is prepared now to carry forward . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry, but that's not a point of privilege.

MR. GREEN: If the honourable member doesn't have a point of privilege then the Honourable Member from Morris has . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, I think that the Member for Arthur does not in fact have a point of privilege; he has a question which he can ask later. I recognize the Member for Morris has a point of order.

MR. JORGENSEN: My point of order is simply that the Minister of Agriculture is obviously carrying out an assignment that has been entrusted to him, in that he is to take up as much time as he possibly can in the conduct of his estimates by repetition. He has repeated himself at least a half a dozen times dealing with what the Honourable Member for Crescentwood would call trivia, and we have listened to him on at least a half a dozen occasions repeat himself time after time. We all know what he is attempting to do, he is trying to prevent the estimates of the Department of Industry and Commerce coming before this House. Now there are questions that are asked to the Minister and we expect him to answer those questions, but he need not deal at length with the replies that he has given to questions at least a half a dozen times in this House. This is a deliberate attempt to stall his estimates and I object to it very strenuously. I think that the rule of repetitiveness should apply in this case.

MR. GREEN: Well, Mr. Chairman, I think that the honourable member makes a kind of accusation which can't be justified, either in fact or even by any possible assumption. The length of time which the departments of the government will take is entirely within the hands of the opposition, and the fact is that they can let these estimates pass at any time or they can ask questions which call for repetitive answers. The Minister of Agriculture when he started to speak indicated that he was going to make a statement in the House which he had previously made and that he would repeat because the honourable members asked for it, and he, as I recall it, undertook to not repeat it if they didn't want it answered, and the member who asked the question, to my way of thinking, urged him on.

But in any event, I think that the fact is that really the length of time that we take here depends on the opposition, and if my honourable friend was in the House in previous years, I concede that it is a fact that some Ministers speak longer than others, but I suggest to the honourable member that this is a matter of style and has nothing to do -- well if the honourable

(MR. GREEN cont'd) member would recall the Minister who was in the seat that I am now occupying, the Honourable Member for Gimli, he spent an awfully long time and I would say that he took longer than the Minister for Agriculture is now taking, but it never inspired on our side of the House a suggestion that any departments were being hidden. I assure the honourable member that every Minister in the House is prepared to stand up and answer for his estimates if they come up, but I sat in the House for three years and I don't remember getting past seven or eight departments. Last session, the short session was the first time we finished all departments. So I know that my honourable friend may be exasperated, but I do think that it's unfair to make that kind of charge when really the matters at issue are within the hands of the opposition, and if you wish to get past this department, then ask this particular Minister less questions. I can't, nor can any person in the House control the style of a particular speaker. I can't control the style of the Member from Morris and I don't think that he should try to control the style of this particular Minister.

MR. WATT: Mr. Chairman, on the same point of order, I take exception to the remarks that my honourable friend has just made that the time on estimates lies right in the lap of the opposition. This is not correct because I have been trying for weeks to get a direct answer out of the Minister on his position in Ottawa, and he tonight has taken half an hour to say in one line, he said it will do nothing for the farmers in the Province of Manitoba. That's all I wanted him to say and I have been trying to get that out of him for weeks. And all I want to ask now of the First Minister is, in the light of that statement, in that short sentence . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: . . . continues, I might say as the Chairman that I have on several occasions drawn to the attention of the members that there has been considerable repetition in this debate. We have had several topics which have been literally flogged to death, and I think that the Minister has certainly repeated himself and I think certain members in the opposition have repeated certain arguments over and over and over again and asked the Minister to repeat things. I think that I might also point out that we are nearing the nine hours mark on this department, which is a fair amount of time for consideration. We all know that there is a rule on irrelevance and repetition in debate and I think that that has been violated on numerous occasions. So perhaps the members of the opposition, and the Minister who is holding forth against them, might bear in mind that we have had quite a long go at this department and that perhaps we can attempt to be a little more crisp in our comments and see whether we can get through. The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. BARKMAN: Are these points of order the last 10 or 15 minutes deducted from the Agricultural Estimates?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think so. The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. USKIW: To be fair, Mr. Chairman, I have to say to my honourable friend the Member for Arthur that he had challenged either the Premier or myself to state our position relative to cash advances and he repeated himself two or three times, that he demanded a statement from this side, and I was just beginning to give him my remarks when he decided that I was using up too much time. Now I want, for the benefit of my honourable friends opposite to know what the position of this government is or was when they made the proposal to the Government of Canada so that we can have some intelligent debate since they don't remember what the proposal was when it was announced in the Chamber - when it was discussed before. My honourable friend says perhaps a better subject would be the matter of transportation, and I am sure that that would be a very enjoyable exercise because everyone opposite would like to know what's happening in transportation. But as soon as they pass this department, Mr. Chairman, as soon as they pass this department, I am sure that my honourable friend the Minister of Transportation will be quite pleased to reveal to members of this House what the road program is going to be for this fiscal year.

So assuming there won't be the kind of interruption that I have had, I think that it won't take too long to complete my remarks -- (Interjection) -- my answer. What is the proposal re the cash advance proposal that was made to Ottawa by the government of Manitoba. I stated in the House a few days ago that we had proposed some time ago to the Government of Canada - as a matter of fact at the Federal-Provincial Conference - that the government of Manitoba was willing to put up some \$12 million towards a provincial cash advance program that would supplement the federal cash advance program, provided that the Government of Canada would agree to cooperate in the collection of these advances for the Province of Manitoba when the grain was sold, and that if they were not prepared to undertake that kind of a commitment - and I think

(MR. USKIW cont'd) you have to appreciate the fact that we have to get that kind of commitment from the Government of Canada simply because they are in charge and in complete control of the industry. They are in control of the Canadian Wheat Board; they decide what the quotas are going to be, as is quite evident - as is quite evident - so therefore we must have the cooperation of the Government of Canada if we are at all going to enter into a provincial scheme of supplementary cash advances.

Now the proposal was made at the Federal-Provincial Conference. It was not a facetious proposal; it was a serious proposal put down on paper - and surely my honourable friends ought to respect that - and there was an alternative, that if the Government of Canada couldn't see fit, with the conditions that we placed in our proposal -- the conditions were: Proposal No. 1, that they would collect for us, when the grain was delivered to the elevator, our advance first and theirs second or last. Since we have no jurisdiction over grain but are willing to put up the money to assist the farmers of Manitoba, we felt this was a reasonable request.

Now having refused that, we said that we would offer them a second proposal or an alternative, that we would be prepared to make cash advances available to farmers with grain surpluses if they would proportionately refund to us those advances when grain is sold at the elevators - proportionately. If they put in \$6.00 and we put in \$1.00, give us one-seventh or whatever it amounts to. So it would take us two years maybe to collect our money back, so what? We are prepared to spend a million or \$2 million in interest charges at the provincial level to put some money into the hands of the farmers of Manitoba.

So these were serious proposals, Mr. Chairman. My honourable friends have no right on the other side to suggest that the government of Manitoba did not make any serious attempt to deal with the grain crisis as we have it and recognize it in the Province of Manitoba. So, Mr. Chairman, I am sure you will be relieved, I ~~shan't~~ repeat that particular proposal again unless my friends opposite request that I do so.

The Member for River Heights this afternoon dealt at some length with the question of the farm crisis on the prairies, the fact that the Prime Minister of Canada was not responding to a need, that he was ignorant of what is happening on the prairies, or if he wasn't ignorant of it at least he wasn't prepared to deal with it, and that he was suggesting that the government of Manitoba has indeed a vital role to play to make sure that the Prime Minister is aware of the problem, and he somehow implied that we have not adequately made the Prime Minister aware of what the situation is, that we were relying too heavily on the Prime Minister's cabinet men in charge of the agricultural industry and that really we should be talking to the Prime Minister himself because he carries a great deal of authority and prestige and so forth. I have to agree with him that he is probably right, but I also have to advise my honourable friend from River Heights that the Prime Minister was chairman of that conference which we attended, in which we made these proposals which were just mentioned a few moments ago and participated in discussion of these proposals. He was not unaware of the seriousness of the prairie economy; this was brought home to him very very sincerely and forthrightly, Mr. Chairman.

As a matter of fact, it was rather amusing, the Prime Minister was probably more cooperative than were his Cabinet Ministers because he didn't see any objection to allowing us to provide supplementary cash advances, but obviously it was that he didn't quite understand what the implications were in the Federal Government. -- (Interjection) -- well, my honourable friend the Member for Lakeside would like to know whether I was talking this long.

MR. ENNS: I've been walking around the building for the last half hour.

MR. USKIW: I want to advise my honourable friend that there were a few interruptions which did take a bit of time, but it is not my intention to prolong the debate beyond which is necessary to answer some of the questions which have been put.

MR. CHAIRMAN: More questions means more time in answering questions.

MR. ENNS: Well that's why I absented myself from the House so I would facilitate the estimates.

MR. USKIW: So, Mr. Chairman, it is true that the Premier of Manitoba as well as myself had to assume the kind of responsibility that was suggested by the Member for River Heights, that we had to talk to the Prime Minister about the problems of the prairies and I want to say that we did, as I have indicated. As a matter of fact, we also did it very informally, because that particular evening we were invited to a dinner, before which we had a few social drinks and were able to discuss matters in a lighter vein, and we again had the opportunity of discussing matters with the Prime Minister.

(MR. USKIW cont'd)

And I just might quote a little story, Mr. Chairman. The Honourable Member for Inkster, the Minister of Mines and Resources, when he was discussing the prairie problem with the Prime Minister in a rather light vein, he suggested to him that if out of the 265 Members of Parliament about 170 were from the prairies, that we probably wouldn't have to discuss the grain problem because there would be no problem. Now this was sort of a light discussion on the subject matter, but we did it formally in debate, Mr. Chairman, at the federal level and we did it informally, so that, shall we say, all ends were covered and -- (Interjection) -- Ends. e-n-d-s.

MR. ENNS: Was I called upon, Mr. Chairman, to make a remark?

MR. USKIW: And we exercised every opportunity - we exercised every opportunity at that conference to bring home to the Government of Canada the fact that there was a serious problem on the prairies. And I want to say that without any exaggeration, without any exaggeration, Manitoba was the only province of the prairies that made very definite proposals which impinged on its own finances.

MR. WATT: Mr. Chairman, would the Minister submit to a question at this time? Could I ask the Minister if it is correct to assume that there will be no provincial cash advances to the farmers? And I ask this question while we have the Provincial Treasurer, the Minister of Finance over on this side of the House. Could he give me an answer, yes or no? There will be no cash advances as far as the province is concerned?

MR. USKIW: All right - my honourable friend wants to know - I want to say that it's still within the realm of possibility, and I want to say to my honourable friend the reason it is still within the realm of possibility is because I undertook to send a letter to the Minister of Agriculture of Canada and to the Minister in charge of wheat . . .

MR. WATT: . . . while the Minister of Finance is on this side of the House? Is it possible that it may come? It's probable? Possible?

MR. USKIW: Yes, it's possible. And I have yet not received my reply from either of the two federal ministers, and my letter was notwithstanding the fact -- (Interjection) -- All right, maybe he didn't get the mail, I don't know. But I did indicate in the letter that was sent that Manitoba was still prepared to honour its proposal, or to proceed with its proposal on the cash advance idea, notwithstanding the fact that the Government of Canada is entering into an inventory reduction program, that it was our position that that program, while it may offset some of the costs of summerfallowing the land this year, it will do nothing to put cash into the farmers' pockets right now, and for that reason we said we were still prepared to carry out that kind of a program if they would cooperate with us. To that I haven't had a formal reply, Mr. Chairman.

It was suggested by the Member for Emerson that world trade in wheat has gone up, that American participation has increased substantially, that Canada's participation has deteriorated. And he's right, he's absolutely right. It's a matter of fact that Canada did not respond, did not respond to the challenge of the international market situation a year or two ago, and because it didn't, because it was trying to uphold an agreement that no other country was paying much attention to, that it failed to make the necessary arrangements whereby the Canadian Wheat Board would have been able to offer grain at prices which were competitive with other exporting countries. And it is true we lost sales as a result of that failure. It is true that Ottawa could have been much more positive, could have dipped into their pocket and said yes, we will pick up the difference and allow the Wheat Board to make those sales in competition with other countries that were prepared to do the very same thing, and for that I think we have to say the Government of Canada failed, failed the prairie farmer in that it did not see to it that we sustained at least our position in the market place of the world.

MR. GORDON W. BEARD (Churchill): Do you think you'll finish by ten, Sam?

MR. USKIW: Well I am sure, Mr. Chairman, that by ten o'clock the Chairman will assure us that we will finish.

The Member for Emerson indicated that he was concerned that the Wheat Board wasn't doing a good job, because of the fact that we've lost these international markets. Now I don't know why my honourable friend would want to chastise the Canadian Wheat Board when it was working under very stringent terms of reference with very little or limited flexibility, wherein it was required at that time to have the kind of flexibility to make it possible to complete in the world markets to make sure that we sustain our trading position. And that can only be done by

(MR. USKIW cont'd) a government that is concerned for the position of the industry, and it wasn't done. It was a failure on the part of government to move, to assist the marketing agency which indeed is in my opinion trying to do a very good job for the farmers of the prairies and should be sustained, by the way.

MR. SCHREYER: Ask the Member for Lakeside if he supports the Wheat Board.

MR. USKIW: Yes. The Premier wants to know whether the Member for Lakeside supports the Wheat Board since he's making some comments.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, without any strings attached, certainly I support the Wheat Board.

MR. USKIW: Well, I would suggest if my honourable friend from Lakeside supports the principle of marketing and the Canadian Wheat Board, I would hope he would at least caucus with his group so that they would indeed endorse more fully the system of marketing, particularly the Member for Morris, Mr. Chairman, needs a bit of educating in that particular area.

The Member for Emerson made some accusation, suggesting that I had indicated that the feed mills of this province were in some way guilty of bringing down the price of feed grain, and I don't know where my friend gets that kind of information. I have never made a statement accusing any sector of the industry of something of that nature. I merely define an illness in the marketing system that allowed this to happen, and you can't blame anyone in the market place for taking advantage of a situation that is not of their doing but exists as an opportunity for them to exploit.

MR. MACKLING: Good private enterprise.

MR. USKIW: Good private enterprise is what I'm told; yes. So if I was a businessman in the feed mill business, Mr. Chairman, I would be probably in the same position as all the other feed mill operators, and rightly so, because they are in the business to make a few dollars and one can't fault them for that.

The Member for Emerson did contradict himself on at least one occasion during his remarks, -- (Interjection) -- The Premier says, "What else is new?" I don't know. The member stated that it was dangerous to encourage diversification and then later on in his speech he said he was pleased that the credit program is encouraging diversification, so I'm just not sure which side of the fence my honourable friend is on, but I thought it was interesting and I made a notation of it. The Attorney-General says that he is hung up somewhere in the middle and maybe that is the case.

He also expressed concern that the present Minister of Agriculture of the Government of Manitoba is sloughing off the problems onto the Federal Government and you know it reminds me of a speech that I made when I was on that side, because that's what I accused my honourable friend from Arthur of doing, that he was not assuming his rightful role as Minister of Agriculture and that he was indeed lax in trying to participate in the development of national agricultural policies.

MR. WATT: What is happening now, Mr. Chairman? If ever there was a slough-off, it stands over there in that chair.

MR. USKIW: You know when I was a member on that side of the House, Mr. Chairman, I can recall on a number of occasions rising in my place and accusing the then Minister of Agriculture of not adequately representing the interests of Manitoba at the federal level of government, not communicating sufficiently, not lobbying if necessary sufficiently, and in particular, and in particular during the time that there was a Conservative government in Canada in Ottawa, members on this side, which was then the Conservative government of Manitoba, failed to provide and to insist on a national agricultural policy that would be meaningful - failed - and if they had done so, if they had exercised their prerogative as the government here and consulted more fully with their counterparts in Ottawa, since they are both of the same stripe, I don't think we would have a farm crisis today. But both the federal members and the provincial members failed to act in a responsible way to bring about a national farm policy that would be meaningful and that would get us away from ad hoc programs -- (Interjection) -- Oh, I see. My honourable friend should have been in his seat this afternoon.

MR. ENNS: That's when we came in and cleared it up, and when we left it started building up again and you know that too, Mr. First Minister.

MR. USKIW: My honourable friend says . . .

MR. WATT: The first march on Winnipeg ever in the Province of Manitoba. -- (Interjection) -- No, the first.

April 9, 1970

775

MR. USKIW: I want to remind my honourable friend, because I think he was absent when I made these remarks in the House this afternoon, that the Diefenbaker government landed a windfall in grain sales. They went about the country - they went about the country and they promoted the farmers into massive expansion of plant capacity, they forced them to borrow a lot of money to break more land, buy more machinery, but they didn't change trade policy to assure that those substantial wheat sales that were made in those few years would continue. And this was the failure, this was leading the prairie farmer down the garden path, Mr. Chairman, and my honourable friends were sitting here when that occurred.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, I hesitate to interrupt my honourable friend in his brief remarks, but I'd like to move that the committee rise.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has directed me to report progress and begs leave to sit again.

IN SESSION

MR. RUSSELL DOERN (Elmwood): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Kildonan, that the report of the committee be received.

MR. SPEAKER presented the motion and after a voice vote declared the motion carried.

MR. SPEAKER: It is now 10 o'clock. The House is adjourned and will stand adjourned until 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.