



**First Session — Thirty-Fourth Legislature**  
of the  
**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**

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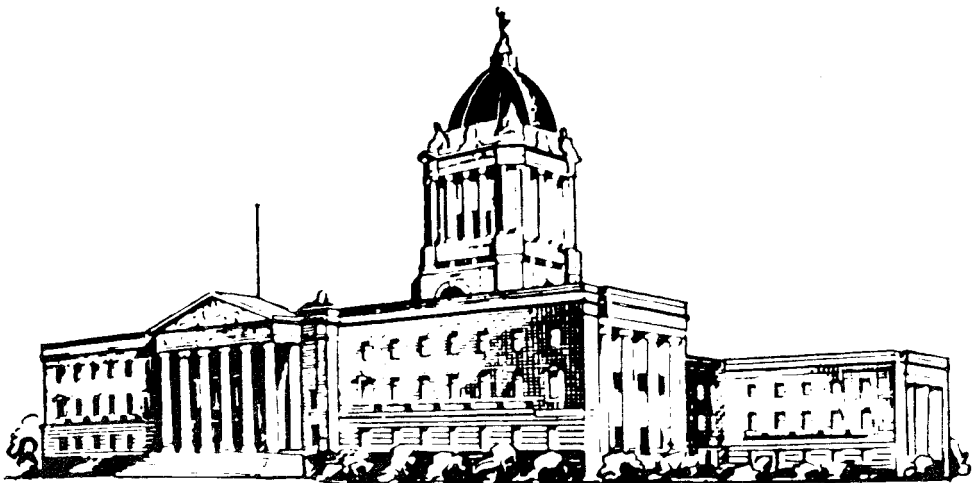
**DEBATES**  
and  
**PROCEEDINGS**  
**(HANSARD)**

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Speaker*



**VOL. XXXVII No. 15 - 1:30 p.m., THURSDAY, AUGUST 11, 1988.**

**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Thirty-Fourth Legislature**

**Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation**

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
<b>ALCOCK, Reg</b>	Osborne	LIBERAL
<b>ANGUS, John</b>	St. Norbert	LIBERAL
<b>ASHTON, Steve</b>	Thompson	NDP
<b>BURRELL, Parker</b>	Swan River	PC
<b>CARR, James</b>	Fort Rouge	LIBERAL
<b>CARSTAIRS, Sharon</b>	River Heights	LIBERAL
<b>CHARLES, Gwen</b>	Selkirk	LIBERAL
<b>CHEEMA, Gulzar</b>	Kildonan	LIBERAL
<b>CHORNOPYSKI, William</b>	Burrows	LIBERAL
<b>CONNERY, Edward Hon.</b>	Portage la Prairie	PC
<b>COWAN, Jay</b>	Churchill	NDP
<b>CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.</b>	Ste. Rose du Lac	PC
<b>DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.</b>	Roblin-Russell	PC
<b>DOER, Gary</b>	Concordia	NDP
<b>DOWNEY, James Hon.</b>	Arthur	PC
<b>DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.</b>	Emerson	PC
<b>DRIEDGER, Herold, L.</b>	Niakwa	LIBERAL
<b>DUCHARME, Gerald, Hon.</b>	Riel	PC
<b>EDWARDS, Paul</b>	St. James	LIBERAL
<b>ENNS, Harry</b>	Lakeside	PC
<b>ERNST, Jim, Hon.</b>	Charleswood	PC
<b>EVANS, Laurie</b>	Fort Garry	LIBERAL
<b>EVANS, Leonard</b>	Brandon East	NDP
<b>FILMON, Gary, Hon.</b>	Tuxedo	PC
<b>FINDLAY, Glen Hon.</b>	Virden	PC
<b>GAUDRY, Neil</b>	St. Boniface	LIBERAL
<b>GILLESHAMMER, Harold</b>	Minnedosa	PC
<b>GRAY, Avis</b>	Ellice	LIBERAL
<b>HAMMOND, Gerrie</b>	Kirkfield Park	PC
<b>HARAPIAK, Harry</b>	The Pas	NDP
<b>HARPER, Elijah</b>	Rupertsland	NDP
<b>HELWER, Edward R.</b>	Gimli	PC
<b>HEMPHILL, Maureen</b>	Logan	NDP
<b>KOZAK, Richard, J.</b>	Transcona	LIBERAL
<b>LAMOUREUX, Kevin, M.</b>	Inkster	LIBERAL
<b>MALOWAY, Jim</b>	Elmwood	NDP
<b>MANDRAKE, Ed</b>	Assiniboia	LIBERAL
<b>MANNES, Clayton, Hon.</b>	Morris	PC
<b>McCRAE, James Hon.</b>	Brandon West	PC
<b>MINENKO, Mark</b>	Seven Oaks	LIBERAL
<b>MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.</b>	River East	PC
<b>NEUFELD, Harold, Hon.</b>	Rossmere	PC
<b>OLESON, Charlotte Hon.</b>	Gladstone	PC
<b>ORCHARD, Donald Hon.</b>	Pembina	PC
<b>PANKRATZ, Helmut</b>	La Verendrye	PC
<b>PATTERSON, Allan</b>	Radisson	LIBERAL
<b>PENNER, Jack, Hon.</b>	Rhineland	PC
<b>PLOHMAN, John</b>	Dauphin	NDP
<b>PRAZNIK, Darren</b>	Lac du Bonnet	PC
<b>ROCAN, Denis, Hon.</b>	Turtle Mountain	PC
<b>ROCH, Gilles</b>	Springfield	PC
<b>ROSE, Bob</b>	St. Vital	LIBERAL
<b>STORIE, Jerry</b>	Flin Flon	NDP
<b>TAYLOR, Harold</b>	Wolseley	LIBERAL
<b>URUSKI, Bill</b>	Interlake	NDP
<b>WASYLYCIA-LEIS, Judy</b>	St. Johns	NDP
<b>YEO, Iva</b>	Sturgeon Creek	LIBERAL

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, August 11, 1988.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

### PRAYERS

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

**Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation):** It gives me pleasure to present the Annual Report of Government Services for the year 1986-87.

**Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Natural Resources):** It gives me great pleasure to table in the House the Five-Year Report To The Legislature On Wildlife.

### ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

#### Port of Churchill Grain Shipments

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):** Manitobans are reeling today from two announcements: one federal and one provincial. Mr. Mayer's announcement that grain was unlikely to be shipped through Churchill in 1988 was quickly followed by the threat of hikes to hydro rates by as much as 30 percent. My question is to the Premier (Mr. Filmon). In his discussions with the Minister on Tuesday evening and in the Minister of Transport's (Mr. Albert Driedger) discussions today, did the federal Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board give his reasons for his unwillingness to aid in the plight of this port in his native province?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, I did not have any discussions with Mr. Mayer on Tuesday evening.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** That comes as some surprise when he said yesterday in the House he had meetings with the Minister.

**Mr. Filmon:** On a point of order, the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) continues to misrepresent statements that are being made. If she will read Hansard, she will see that the Prime Minister and I met two weeks ago to set up a ministerial committee in which three Ministers from the federal Government and three Ministers from the provincial Government would meet. They did so on Tuesday evening. That is what I said in Question Period yesterday. She had better get her facts straight.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Honourable First Minister does not have a point of order. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** Did the Minister explain to the Premier (Mr. Filmon) how the port will be viable next year or

has he explained to any Member of his Cabinet how the Port of Churchill will be viable next year following a drought when this year the Wheat Board will not put shipments through the Port of Churchill?

**Mr. Filmon:** I am not certain whether he put those arguments to any other Minister in my administration. Perhaps she could ask that of another Minister.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** The First Minister has said in the past, in fact a short period of time ago, April 23, that when he talked his federal Leader listens.

Can the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) explain why his federal counterparts are profoundly deaf on the viability of the Port of Churchill?

**Mr. Filmon:** The federal Government has indicated very recently their support for the Port of Churchill. They continue to put money into the operation of the port, into the upgrading of the dust collection facility, into the modernizing of various facilities there. There has been a change to electrical energy from propane and gas. They have done all of those things to make further investments into the Port of Churchill. All of those things are commitments from the federal Government to ensure that they will continue to support the Port of Churchill.

I have gone on the record as saying that my Government and I will do everything possible to support the Port of Churchill to see that it remains viable and to see that it is in a position to ship grain and whatever other products that can be shipped through that port.

My Ministers have talked about -(Interjection)- the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) likes to interject and he gets very excited and has much to say. What he says on the record is not worth listening to for the most part, what he says off the record is even worse.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition did ask a very important question as far as I was concerned and the Honourable First Minister was attempting to answer it. I wish all Honourable Members would contain themselves.

The Honourable First Minister.

**Mr. Filmon:** Mr. Speaker, in addition to our commitment to ensure that that port is used, to do everything that was within our power to see that that port is used, my Ministers have been working about doing other things to support the town of Churchill, to ensure that Churchill remains a viable entity as a community in Manitoba.

They have been talking about other areas of economic development, of other areas of utilizing that entire area in a resource sense for Manitoba's best interests and for the long-term viability of the community. We continue to work to support the community of Churchill and do everything in our power to ensure that it remains viable.

\* (1335)

### Man. Hydro Reserves

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is to the Minister of Energy (Mr. Neufeld).

There appears to be a disagreement between the chairman of Hydro and the Minister of Energy. The Minister of Energy believes reserves of \$1.6 billion are required; the chairman says reserves of \$1.3 billion may be too much.

Can the Minister of Energy tell this House whether he or Manitoba Hydro will determine the reserve requirement of Manitoba Hydro and what will that reserve be?

**Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister of Energy and Mines):** I thank the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) for allowing me to put on record certain facts.

Fact No. 1: We have experienced, or are experiencing, this year, a drought of historic proportions. We had a low water level this year because of a low run-off last spring that also is of record proportions. Scientists tell us that we face the prospect of another drought for 1989. We already know that the coming on stream of Limestone power is going to create losses for us.

Manitoba Hydro, their management and our department are in constant consultation about how the rates are to be set. We want to come down with a policy of setting rates for long term, bearing in mind that the cost of generation is going to go up, bearing in mind that we will have droughts in the future. When those rates have been set, Mr. Speaker, we will so report to the House.

### Hydro Rates Public Hearings

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):** With a supplementary question to the same Minister, will the Minister guarantee the public full participation in public hearings before those rates are set?

**Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister of Energy and Mines):** Mr. Speaker, I should have said the policy will be set, and there will be full consultation with the Government and with Hydro before those policies are set. When that policy has been set, we will come to the House and report on it.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** Mr. Speaker, the Minister obviously does not want to answer the question about whether the public will be able to participate.

Will he therefore say, if such hearings are held, will Manitoba Hydro be required to provide funding for expert witnesses who represent the interests of qualified organizations such as the Canadian Consumers' Association or the Manitoba Society for Seniors?

**Mr. Neufeld:** Mr. Speaker, I do not see how we can set the terms and the guidelines for any rate-setting

policies at this time or any public hearings at this time. When the time comes that we have set a policy, we will make our disclosures.

\* (1340)

### Port of Churchill Grain Shipments

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition):** My question is to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon).

Did the First Minister initiate any phone calls to the Prime Minister this morning in light of Mr. Mayer's comments and in light of the fact that the First Minister stated in this House on his return from Ottawa that the Prime Minister was going to take a personal interest in this issue, having had it raised by the First Minister at the previous meeting?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, on my return from Ottawa, I indicated that the First Minister was made aware by me of the concern about Churchill and that he was committed to ensure that he would do what was able to be done in support of Churchill.

I might say that we have been in constant communication, both my Ministers and I, with federal senior officials and Ministers with respect to our concern about Churchill. Having said that, I think that the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) knows very, very well, as I am sure that the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) should know, that the initiative with respect to Churchill and the shipment of grain is in the hands of a number of Crown agencies and independent authorities of the federal Government, including principally the Canadian Wheat Board.

All of those things must be taken into account and all of those people must be a part of the solution and, obviously, federal Ministers in the federal Government will have to work with and through those agencies if anything is to be done to ensure that Churchill has grain shipped to it this year.

**Mr. Doer:** Mr. Speaker, the First Minister, with the greatest respect, did not answer the question. I asked the First Minister: did he phone the Prime Minister this morning? He told Manitobans before the election that he just had to pick up the phone for a better relationship.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the First Minister given the statements of the Minister responsible for the Wheat Board, did he call the Prime Minister this morning?

**Mr. Filmon:** Mr. Speaker, I repeat for the Leader of the New Democratic Party that my Ministers and I have been in constant touch with the federal Government—with Ministers, with senior officials—to ensure that they were aware of our concerns about the Port of Churchill (Interjection)—if the Leader of the New Democratic Party wants to answer his own question, he can do so.

**Mr. Doer:** I will answer my question because I assume the First Minister did not call the Prime Minister this

morning. I am assuming that because he would not answer twice whether he had in fact phoned him or not.

I would ask the First Minister when he leaves this House today, would he please phone the Prime Minister, invoke this special relationship he has with the Prime Minister, and get the Prime Minister to overrule the obvious insensitive Minister responsible for the Wheat Board.

**Mr. Filmon:** The Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) obviously does not want to understand and know what is happening, how grain is shipped in this country and who makes the decisions as to what method by which grain is shipped.

The Canadian Wheat Board represents the grain producers of this country, and they have been told in no uncertain terms by the Pools that they want the grain to be shipped by the most economical method possible. They have been told by the Pools that they will not tolerate the Wheat Board shipping grain by methods that cost them more money. They have been told so by grain producers, grain producing agencies and organizations in this country. The Canadian Wheat Board has a mandate to ship their grain through the most economical method possible. They also have to ship it to where there are boats available to take it to destinations, and there are a number of factors at play.

If the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) would get involved in trying to understand the issue, he would not be making outlandish suggestions about people going in and ordering people to do something of that nature when they do not have the power to do so.

**Mr. Doer:** The First Minister (Mr. Filmon) two weeks ago stated to Manitobans that he went to the highest authority in the land on Churchill, and now he is saying the Prime Minister of the country does not have any authority to solve this problem.

I want the First Minister to act on behalf of Manitobans in a strident and forceful way on the Port of Churchill. I believe the First Minister should commit to this House and to Manitobans, that he will phone the Prime Minister today and use this highest authority on behalf of Manitobans.

**Mr. Filmon:** The Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) and his predecessors in Government acted, I presume, in a strident and forceful manner throughout their six-and-a-half years in Government, and as a result of it, the Port of Churchill has no long-term viability. Because of these people, it remains year after year after year, subject to decisions being made by outside countries who decide whether or not to take their grain because they were not able to provide an economic base for Churchill, they were not able to provide for other products to be shipped through Churchill, and they leave it at the whims of world drought conditions, world grain market conditions. They leave it in those circumstances because of their former efforts. The Port of Churchill's plight today is as a result of the non efforts of the New Democratic Party in Government.

\* (1345)

## Constitutional Accord Multiculturalism

**Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge):** My question is to the Minister—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The Honourable Member for Rouge has the floor.

**Mr. Carr:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister responsible for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. McCrae): As all Members know, during the last two weeks there has been a wonderful celebration across the city and across this province; the celebration of our multicultural mosaic—a mosaic which can only be described as the fundamental characteristic of Canadian society. Does the Minister believe strongly enough in the multicultural fabric of our nation to mention it specifically in Section 2 of the 1987 Constitutional Accord?

**Hon. James McCrae (Minister responsible for Constitutional Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, how quickly they forget the contents of the Budget. How quickly they want to divert attention from the contents of the Budget.

I and Members on this side of the House are sufficiently concerned about the multicultural fabric of our nation. We are sufficiently concerned that we are willing to listen to what the people of Manitoba have to say about the Meech Lake Accord. Unlike Honourable Members opposite, who in the classic Trudeau tradition, have their minds made up and do not bother me telling me your opinion. The people on this side of the House are willing to listen to what the people of Manitoba have to say.

\* (1350)

## Govt. Boards Multicultural Appts

**Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge):** A supplementary question, if I could, to the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Heritage (Mrs. Mitchelson).

What mechanism has the Minister put in place to ensure that appointments to Government boards and commissions accurately reflect the multicultural nature of Manitoba society?

**Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation):** I would just like to indicate to my honourable friend over there that we are appointing board members on their ability to serve and represent all aspects of Manitoba from the north to the south, to the east to the west of Manitoba. Those people who are qualified, those people who are from every different walk of life and from every different ethnical cultural community.

## Govt. Boards Visible Minorities Appts

**Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge):** With a supplementary question to the same Minister, perhaps she can tell

then to Members of this House how many of the hundred-plus appointments to boards and commissions reflect visible minorities in our community? How many?

**Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture Heritage and Recreation):** I would just like to indicate that I do not have the specific numbers for the Member across the way, because I am not responsible for appointments to every single board across this province, but we will get that information. Every community is represented on our boards, and we will provide that information to the Member opposite.

### Budget Grants Funding

**Mr. Mark Minenko (Seven Oaks):** For the last several months, I have had an opportunity to attend various events where Members of the Government have attended and commented on the importance of the multicultural heritage of our province, and their support for that multicultural heritage. However, when we look to the Throne Speech, there was a blank, there was something missing. I recently heard the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) at the Ukrainian Festival in Dauphin indicate his Government's support for our multicultural heritage. So let us look to the Budget. Where is that support?

My question is to the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation (Mrs. Mitchelson). Why is there an increase in the salaries in the Minister's office of 11 percent when the client groups of the Grant Assistance Program will find it difficult to maintain, just to maintain their present level of services because funding has only been increased by 3 percent, below the rate of inflation?

**Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation):** I thank the Member for that question. I want to indicate that there will be ample opportunity during the Estimates process to discuss and for the Members of the Liberal Party to get their facts straight; because, obviously, the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs), in her response to the Budget Speech, was ill-informed about exactly what was happening with the library system, about what was happening with administrative salaries in the Budget.

Looking at numbers does not indicate the true facts and the true picture and I would like—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** The Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) indicated that our support to libraries in the Province of Manitoba had decreased some \$1 million. Well, if she knew the true picture, she would realize that our support to libraries in the Province of Manitoba has increased by 9.9 percent.

**Mr. Minenko:** It is very interesting the Minister can answer a question that was not asked.

**Mr. Speaker:** Question.

### Budget Libraries Funding

**Mr. Mark Minenko (Seven Oaks):** One of the major areas of concern of the Liberal Party is the excellence in education. We can all agree that an important element of education is, in fact, libraries. How does this Government intend to fund this province's libraries when this Government has deleted from her budget for the department over \$1 million from the Public Library Services Grant Assistance program?

**Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation):** Mr. Speaker, I thought I just answered the question indicating that the libraries' budget for the Province of Manitoba has increased by 9.9 percent.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** The Honourable Minister is trying to answer the question.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Speaker, the Provincial Auditor over the past few years has been very concerned about what has been going on in the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation, where some of the department have been funded through Lotteries and some of it has been funded through appropriation, and there has been a mix and a combination.

Mr. Speaker, we have taken a step in the right direction by putting all salaries and operating costs for the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation into appropriation this year, and we are funding programming for the Province of Manitoba out of Lotteries. There has just been a give and take.

### Lotteries Cultural Funding

**Mr. Mark Minenko (Seven Oaks):** It would seem to be clear that, from the Minister's answer or non-answer, we can look to Lotteries for supplying even more of the money, certainly compared to the comments of their critic for Culture, Heritage and Recreation last year where they were very much concerned with the amount coming out of Lotteries.

Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary to the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation (Mrs. Mitchelson) is with the extra money coming out of Lotteries for all kinds of different programs that she seems to suggest, can the Minister assure this House that the additional funds being allocated from lotteries are not going to be diverted from ethnocultural organizations in this province?

**Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation):** I thank the Member for that question because I want to indicate that we, as a Government, have taken some positive directions since we have formed Government with the ethnic community. We have commissioned an audit by the Provincial Auditor of MIC. We have a task force report under way that we are going to be acting on and dealing with in the very

near future. We are concerned about the multicultural community in this province, and we are going to work together with them. I have committed to consultation and cooperation and working together with the grassroots in the multicultural community. So we know what their needs are and we will meet their needs.

**Mr. Gulzar Cheema (Kildonan):** Mr. Speaker . . .

### Port of Churchill All-Party Cttee Meeting

**Mr. Speaker:** Sorry, the Honourable Member for Churchill.

**Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, a meeting was held between the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger) and the federal Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, Mr. Charlie Mayer, in the Minister of Highways' office.

My question is to the Minister of Highways and Transportation. Can he indicate to this Legislature when Mr. Charlie Mayer, his federal counterpart, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, will be meeting with the all-Party legislative committee, which was unanimously established by all Members of this Legislature just a few short days ago?

**Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation):** First of all, I would like to inform the House that it was myself who met with the federal Minister responsible for the Wheat Board, Mr. Mayer, this morning at eleven o'clock. This came about because of a request I had made on behalf of the committee that was formed here last Thursday in this House of which I am the chairman. We had made requests for Mr. Mayer to attend a meeting on Tuesday. Mr. Mayer was not available to attend at that time. Subsequently we asked Mr. Mayer, the federal Minister, to attend tomorrow afternoon at two o'clock when the next meeting is slated for the committee. Mr. Mayer, late last night, phoned and indicated that he would be prepared to meet with myself today in the morning. Subsequent to that, we did meet and, with the permission of the House, I would like to possibly call the committee this afternoon to meet so that I can report as to the results of the meeting with the Minister.

**Mr. Cowan:** Mr. Speaker, Members of the committee on this side of the House have said on every occasion we are prepared to meet. If Mr. Mayer is down in this building at midnight, we are prepared to come down here at midnight to meet with him. If he is here at eleven o'clock to twelve o'clock during the day, we are prepared to meet with him. When we went to the Minister of Highways' (Mr. Driedger) office today to ask Mr. Mayer if he would be appearing before the committee, he said no. He refused to appear before the legislative all-Party committee.

Is the Minister of Highways and Transportation going to call upon Mr. Mayer to reverse that decision and to reverse the decision not to ask the Canadian Wheat Board to ship grain through the Port of Churchill and

have him appear before a committee which was struck with the unanimous consent and support of every one of the 57 Members of this Legislature, yourself included?

**Mr. Albert Driedger:** Mr. Speaker, first of all, I am not in control of Mr. Mayer's agenda. He makes his own decisions, and he made a statement to the press as well as to the Members across that he had no intentions of meeting with the committee. That is Mr. Mayer's prerogative, it is not mine.

I and my colleagues have done everything we can over the past three weeks to try and encourage the shipping of grain through the Port of Churchill to the point where I have been in Ottawa. My Premier (Mr. Filmon) has talked with the Prime Minister. We have been and are doing everything possible to try and encourage the movement of grain through the Port of Churchill. It is not my responsibility what the federal Minister responsible for the Wheat Board does. What we are trying to do is lobby the Minister and his counterparts, and we do that as effectively as we can.

I want to indicate again that I am prepared to call the committee this afternoon to indicate to them the course of the conversation that has taken place. I have not discussed it in public. I have indicated to the news media that I will report to the committee first so that the committee can choose the next course of action.

\* (1400)

### Port of Churchill All-Party Cttee Meeting

**Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill):** Mr. Mayer did report in public, and he said he would not appear before that committee.

My question is to the Premier (Mr. Filmon). Given the fact that Mr. Mayer has refused to attend a meeting with that committee, which was struck by this House with unanimous consent including that of the Premier, will the Premier call his friend, his pal, his buddy, Mr. Mulroney, the Prime Minister, and ask Mr. Mulroney to direct Mr. Mayer to meet with the legislative committee that has the full support of every Member in this Legislature so that he can be informed as to our concerns and our strong support for the Port of Churchill, and so that he can tell the committee why it is directly he refuses to ask the Wheat Board to intervene on behalf of the Port of Churchill or to ask the Wheat Board to ship only their fair share of grain to that port?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, I think that what we have to have here is an understanding that all of us are working towards the same objective. This is not a matter of politics to help the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) or the New Democratic Party or the Liberal Party or the Conservative Party. When we all supported that particular resolution in the House, it was to demonstrate that all Parties have the same goal and objective and that is to ensure that the Port of Churchill remains viable and that the community of Churchill gets the support from all of us.

Mr. Mayer, for whatever reasons—he will have to explain publicly—has taken the position that he is not available to meet with the committee. Mr. Mayer has said—and I invite the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) to phone him directly—that he will meet with New Democratic Party Members if they want to meet with him on this issue. He has said that he will meet with Liberal Party Members if they want to meet with him on this issue. He has met with the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger). He said that he is not available or not able to meet with the committee. That is his prerogative; he will have to answer for that. But if he wants to really do something constructive, he can phone Mr. Mayer directly. Mr. Mayer has indicated that he will meet with him.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Honourable Member for Churchill, with a final supplementary.

**Mr. Cowan:** Following that suggestion by Mr. Mayer, that we phone his office for a meeting, we did in fact phone his office for a meeting. We were informed that Mr. Mayer is in the Legislature meeting with the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger) and perhaps we should catch up with him there for a meeting.

The fact is we have asked for that meeting. The fact is it is not the meeting with us that is important, it is not the meeting with the Conservatives alone that is important, it is a meeting with the all-Party legislative committee with Liberal representation, Conservative representation and New Democratic Party representation there.

Will the First Minister call the First Minister in Ottawa, Mr. Mulroney, and ask him if he will impose upon his Minister, the Minister responsible for the Wheat Board, Mr. Charlie Mayer, to meet with the committee that has the full support of himself, the Minister of Highways, yourself and this entire Legislature?

**Mr. Filmon:** Two weeks ago when I indicated I was taking up the matter with the Prime Minister, Members opposite said that was not good enough. They said that they wanted the committee. They have the committee, they have met with officials who have met with him, and now they are saying that is not good enough. Well, Mr. Speaker, he better make up his mind.

### Employment Programs Recent Immigrants

**Mr. Gulzar Cheema (Kildonan):** My question is to the Minister of Employment Services and Economic Security (Mrs. Oleson).

Mr. Speaker, importance of multicultural competition in Manitoba is widely acknowledged. But it is extremely important that the new arrivals to Manitoba are allowed to use the value of their skills and education they bring to this country.

Will the Minister tell this House what steps she is going to be taking to secure and expand the Government program which will help recent arrivals to

obtain employment based on their academic and skill levels?

**Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Employment Services and Economic Security):** Yes, there is a program for that very purpose in the Department of Employment Services and Economic Security. I think it would be more meaningful if we discussed that during the Estimates process, and we could discuss it back and forth.

**Mr. Cheema:** My supplementary, again to the same Minister will the Minister tell this House what plans she has to secure and expand the program, such as programs for the newcomers for the support services and programs called "Recognition" under the Immigration and Settlement Branch? Indeed, are there plans to terminate this very important program?

**Mrs. Oleson:** As I indicated to the Member, I think we could have a more meaningful discussion of that during the Estimates process. I cannot carry the number of books it would take to answer for every specific question like that. I physically cannot carry them into the House.

**Mr. Cheema:** My final supplementary, again to the same Minister, through the same branch, there is another successful and critical program called Access Services—I am sure the Minister knows about this program—which helps ethnocultural communities access a variety of social services, social programs and services.

Will the Minister tell this House whether this program is targeted for expansion and growth as the number of the ethnocultural community is growing everyday?

**Mrs. Oleson:** We continue to have those programs under the department and we will be working to expand them. As I said before, and I hate to repeat this, because I know, I can understand, having been in Opposition, the frustration of not getting answers, but the specific answers will be given in the Estimates period.

### Port of Churchill Grain Shipments

**Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin):** I have a question for the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger).

In view of the fact that the Minister responsible for the Wheat Board, Charlie Mayer, has indicated in a news report that it is more expensive to ship grain through the Port of Churchill, in view of the fact that the IBI Report that was commissioned by the federal and provincial Governments in 1986—completed by IBI Consulting Group—has demonstrated clearly, without having those facts refuted, that there is a shipping cost advantage of \$14 to \$20 per tonne by shipping through the Port of Churchill over eastern ports, will this Minister of Highways and Transportation correct the record and ensure that the facts are placed on the record insofar as the cost advantage of shipping through Churchill is concerned?

**Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation):** I believe it would be irresponsible for



me to get into a debate in this House when I am prepared to take and report to the committee the tone of the conversation that took place with the federal Minister and myself. I have offered this twice already today, that I am prepared to take and report to the committee. If I run around and make statements about what has happened in that meeting, I think I would not be serving the interests of the committee, which I value very highly, which was established by this Legislature. I think that is my responsibility, to report to that committee first and then make statements about that.

**Mr. Plohman:** The federal Minister, Charlie Mayer, has made a public statement in which he has taken the side of those anti-Churchill lobbyists who say it is more expensive to ship through Churchill.

I am asking this Minister does he support that statement or will he put on the record the fact that it is cheaper to ship through Churchill from the Churchill catchment area? Does he concur with that statement by the Minister responsible for the Wheat Board or will he correct that record?

**Mr. Albert Driedger:** For the past three-and-a-half to four weeks, I have spent virtually all my available time to try and get this thing together so that we have movement of grain through the Port of Churchill. My colleagues and I have made every effort, including efforts that are coming in the coming weeks in terms of trying to get participation from other provinces, to support this kind of activity. Our support has never been—how can anybody challenge our support for the Port of Churchill? We are doing everything we can in that direction and will continue to do so.

As I indicated, again, I think there is a lot of discussion that has to take place so that everybody becomes aware of the full terms of what is involved in getting grain moved through the Port of Churchill. I am going to make myself as available as I can to anybody to do that.

**Mr. Plohman:** If this Minister is now saying that he is powerless to get any results from the federal Government, along with his Premier (Mr. Filmon), who said that he could just pick up the phone to get results, I ask him why he is not working through the committee that was set up by this Legislature, supported by all Parties, in order to increase that leverage to ensure that we do get results for the people of Manitoba?

**Mr. Albert Driedger:** It happens to be my privilege to be chairman of that committee. From the time when that committee was formed last Thursday, we immediately moved forth to try and have a meeting established. We had one on Tuesday afternoon with the grain authority, with the CN people. Subsequent to that, we have been moving forward to try and have further meetings. I had a meeting myself with the Minister responsible for the Wheat Board, and I am prepared—we have another meeting slated. If the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) does not have any confidence in the committee, then I do not know why we struck that committee. I have all the confidence in that committee and that we should meet and discuss further action that should be taken.

\* (1410)

### Affirmative Action

**Mr. Allan Patterson (Radisson):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for the Civil Service Commission (Mr. Connery).

The previous administration implemented a program of Affirmative Action in the Civil Service that was comprehensive in its scope. I would like to ask the Minister if he can inform the House if this program is being continued, or will continue, in its present form?

**Hon. Edward Connery (Minister responsible for the Civil Service):** I thank the Member for that question. Yes, Affirmative Action is very high in the importance of this Government and from our office.

As you know, the position of the director—the director left the position. I spoke to Mr. Hart who is the head of the Civil Service about this particular situation. He informed me that he thought it was better for Affirmative Action that the various departments take the initiative, rather than being isolated in one department, and the Director of Human Resources is the person who it is being directed to. I am satisfied, at this point, that Affirmative Action will be enhanced in this way. We will watch it, but if it is not, then we will make some other changes, but this Government is well prepared to ensure that Affirmative Action will continue and be enhanced with this Government.

**Mr. Patterson:** Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. We on this side of the House are certainly very supportive of Affirmative Action. Can the Minister tell us if, in fact, the projected targets are being met?

**Mr. Connery:** Targets are one thing to set numbers. That does not really mean a lot to the Affirmative people. We will ensure that the minorities, the visible minorities, of this province, whether they be handicapped, whether they be women, whatever, will have a fair opportunity for work in this province. We are committed to it, and if we need further action we will take it, but I can assure you that this Government is concerned about Affirmative Action. We have not ignored it, we have done the discussions, we have looked at it very carefully and I can assure you if there was other action needed it will take place. But I am assured by the Director of the Civil Service Commission that what we are doing is in the best interests of Affirmative Action.

**Mr. Speaker:** The time for oral questions has expired.

### MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):** I would like to move a resolution under Rule 27.

Moved by the Leader of the Opposition, and seconded by the Honourable Member for Concordia, the Leader of the New Democratic Party,

WHEREAS the Port of Churchill is Canada's only northern seaport and a valuable asset to

Manitoba, prairie farmers and the entire country; and

WHEREAS the federal Minister responsible for the Wheat Board has indicated that he will not take action to ensure that there will be an adequate shipping season this year at the Port of Churchill; and

WHEREAS if this were to happen, it would create severe hardship for Churchill residents, their families, the business community and other communities along the bayline, such as Gillam; and

WHEREAS grain that could be shipped through Churchill is being diverted to other points at greater expense to prairie farmers; and

WHEREAS the Conservative Government has failed to impress upon their counterparts in the federal Government the importance of the Port of Churchill and the need for continued shipments through Churchill this year; and

WHEREAS this Legislature has put aside partisan differences to support the Port of Churchill; and

WHEREAS there is an immediate requirement for a strong, united and pro-active defence of the Port of Churchill if we are to salvage this year's shipping season.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, under Rule 27, that the ordinary business of the House be set aside to discuss a matter of urgent public importance; namely, the effects on the Town of Churchill, Gillam, other communities on the bayline, Northern Manitoba and the province as a whole, resulting from the apparent refusal by the Honourable Charlie Mayer, the federal Minister responsible for the Wheat Board, to take action on behalf of the Port of Churchill.

**Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

To use the words of the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs), her first words spoken on this issue today were "Mr. Speaker, I would like to move a resolution." By the Leader of the Opposition's own admission, what we have before us is a resolution which requires 48 hours notice.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Honourable Member for Churchill, on the same point of order.

**Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill):** Mr. Speaker, it is very clear—

**Mr. Speaker:** On the point of order?

**Mr. Cowan:** On the point of order, it is very clear that we are operating under Rule No. 27; I believe it was referenced that we are operating under Rule No. 27. It is in the motion—perhaps if I can just repeat for the edification of the Attorney-General and the Government House Leader—the therefore be it resolved reads "THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, under Rule No. 27."

If he would take the time to acquaint himself with Rule No. 27 in the Rules of the Legislature, he will find that exactly what is being put forward by the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) and seconded by the Leader of the NDP (Mr. Doer) is contemplated in Rule No. 27. It is a motion to put aside the ordinary business of the House and I believe that he is not attempting to circumvent or to prevent the debate on this particular issue, but one has to take into account their lack of willingness before to discuss this on an urgent basis.

Notwithstanding that, Mr. Speaker, it is very clearly stated that Rule No. 27 is the operative rule which is before the House at the present time.

**Mr. Speaker:** I would like to thank all Honourable Members. I was of the opinion it was under Rule 27.

The Honourable Government House Leader.

**Mr. McCrae:** Just further on the point of order. You cannot call it a resolution and not a resolution in the same breath. Resolutions, as we know them, contain WHEREASes and BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVEDs and that is what we have here in this, and the notice required for a resolution like that is two days notice.

**Mr. Reg Alcock (Opposition House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order.

The Honourable Government House Leader (Mr. McCrae) knows full well that he will have opportunity under Rule 27 to debate the admissibility of this motion. A similar motion, with the same sort of resolution, was deemed to be admissible 10 days ago, was deemed to be debatable under Rule 27, 10 days ago.

**Mr. Speaker:** I would like to thank all Honourable Members. On that point of order, I have researched it and, as Speaker Graham has done in the past, he has ruled, so there is not a precedence.

Therefore, before determining whether the motion meets the requirement of our Rule 27, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) has five minutes to state her case for urgency of debate on this matter.

A spokesperson for each of the other Parties will also have five minutes to state the position of their Parties on this matter.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** Mr. Speaker, I know that you are going to listen to the advice given by all three Parties on this particular position, and I know that traditionally Speakers in this House have erred on the side of caution when it comes to emergency debates.

\* (1420)

I, too, erred on the side of caution some two weeks ago because I believed at that time that there was some progression being made with regard to the future of the Port of Churchill. The First Minister was in Ottawa on that very day, and I believed, and I later had it confirmed, that he indeed did raise the subject of the Port of Churchill with the Prime Minister, and I felt that

out of respect for that meeting that was going on, we should not hold an emergency debate at that particular time.

I also believed that we had certain conditions to meet. One of those were that the opportunity for other areas of debate were not available. At that point, we had just begun the debate on the Speech from the Throne; we had not yet entered into the debate on the Budget Speech. Today the Throne Speech Debate is complete.

The Budget Speech Debate is halfway through. Both the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) and I have spoken on the reply to the Budget. Therefore, there is not an opportunity for us at this particular moment to raise in those two avenues the urgency of this particular crisis because the Rules of the House do not give us the opportunity to speak a second time.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, we have had an announcement today which negates the very positive resolution that was passed by all three Parties just last week. That positive resolution which formed an all-Party committee had as its essence the opportunity for the committee to meet with individuals such as the Minister responsible for the Wheat Board who could indeed affect some change in the grain shipments out of the Port of Churchill. We have learned only this morning that the Minister responsible for the Wheat Board, the Honourable Charles Mayer, will not meet with the committee.

Therefore, the committee regrettably has become somewhat of an empty shell. It is therefore imperative on behalf of all Members of all this Legislature that we put on the record our very strong feelings, strong feelings shared, I believe, by every single Member of this House about the viability of the Port of Churchill. We can then take that record of our debate, we can give that record of debate to both the Prime Minister of this country, to the Honourable Charles Mayer, to the Wheat Board and, hopefully, in that way affect the desired change. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Honourable Government House Leader, who has five minutes in which to address the urgency of debating this matter today.

**Mr. McCrae:** Mr. Speaker, I must say that the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) is indeed a wonderment. I say a "wonderment" because, whether it be on this issue or any other issue that is current in Manitoba today, we hear one thing today from the Leader of the Opposition and we hear something else the next day from the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Honourable Opposition House Leader, on a point of order.

**Mr. Alcock:** I believe the instruction is to speak to the urgency of debate.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Honourable Member does not have a point of order. The Honourable Government House Leader.

**Mr. McCrae:** I know it is getting more and more important, Mr. Speaker, to attempt to protect the Leader

of the Opposition from stepping in her own messes. It was not very long ago on matters just like this, procedurally speaking—we were talking about in-vitro fertilization, Friday, July 22, and on a matter of emergency debates the Leader of the Opposition said: "There are certain rules which are required for emergency debate. One is that there is no other opportunity to discuss this issue. We have already raised it this morning, and I put the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) on notice that we will continue to raise it in Question Period. We will raise it in our replies to the Speech from the Throne; we will raise it in our Budget presentations. We will raise it in the Estimates process."

This Leader of the Opposition will brag to you, Mr. Speaker, that consistently when she was the Leader of the third Party in this House that in every case she would never use the rules and play around and play games with the rules. Now, all of a sudden, because the Budget of the Government of Manitoba is so pleasing to the people of Manitoba, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) wants to discuss something which is already the subject of intense scrutiny by an all-Party committee put together by this Legislature.

The mandate of the committee that all three Parties in this House put together last week is not complete. Honourable Members opposite should recognize that.

Mr. Speaker, one of our rules, Rule 27, one of the subparagraphs to Rule—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Now this is a very important issue and I am trying very hard to hear the arguments from all Honourable Members. Therefore, I wish all Honourable Members—

**Mr. McCrae:** Mr. Speaker—

**Mr. Speaker:** The Honourable Government House Leader.

**Mr. McCrae:** —Rule 27.(5)(c) states that the motion shall not revive discussion on a matter that has been decided in the same Session. That alone should be enough to convince anyone that this matter should not set aside the business of the debate that we have before us.

Honourable Members opposite, in Committee of Supply, have the opportunity to raise grievances under Rule 26.(1), subparagraph (1). They have oral questions everyday. They have the Estimates Procedure. We are offering today to move the Estimates of the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger) to number one spot in the Estimates. The Budget Debate gives Honourable Members plenty of latitude.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) suggests that she has already spoken in the Budget. Well, if she has already spoken in the Budget, why did she not raise this matter when she had that opportunity? She did not do that.

We have already discussed, in regard to the resolution respecting in-vitro fertilization, the opportunities that

are available to Honourable Members, and they are manifold opportunities to Honourable Members. Honourable Members on this side are taking part in that committee.

We supported the resolutions along with every other Party. It is unfortunate that Opposition Parties in this House have to use an issue like the Port of Churchill for political advantage when Honourable Members opposite told me and told everyone in this House that this was a matter of non-partisan concern.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

The Honourable Member for Churchill.

**Mr. Cowan:** On a point of order.

The Government House Leader (Mr. McCrae) knows full well, or at least should know full well, that to impute motives on the part of any Member of this House is unparliamentary. I would ask that he apologize to all Members of this House for that imputation of motives which we find particularly offensive and which the people of Churchill and northern Manitoba and Manitoba, generally, find particularly offensive.

**Mr. McCrae:** I, of course, will apologize for using language in this House that is not appropriate.

**Mr. Speaker:** I would like to thank the Honourable Member.

**Mr. McCrae:** It is precisely because Honourable Members, and I thought all Honourable Members, in this House were concerned about the residents of the Port of Churchill and the community there that we have an all-Party committee.

The fact is you cannot bring in a matter like this, which, because we already have—that matter has been disposed of in this House, and we cannot revive that matter in this House. The work of that committee is not completed. Honourable Members opposite may not like certain comments they read in the newspaper on one particular day, but good heavens, we read diametrically opposed statements from the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) from one day to the next.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Honourable Member for Churchill with five minutes with the urgency of debating this matter to date.

**Mr. Cowan:** Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt, the matter that is before us at this time is one of extreme urgency, firstly; and, secondly, it is a matter of grave public importance.

**Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Labour):** Why was it not in the Throne Speech?

**Mr. Cowan:** The Minister of Labour (Mr. Connery) says, "Why was it not in the Throne Speech?" I had wanted to ask the Conservative Government why they did not include any reference to the Port of Churchill in the

Throne Speech, but I can tell him that almost a major portion of my comments on the Throne Speech and comments of others in reply to the Throne Speech were on the Port of Churchill. We did regret their oversight but we tried to make up for it in our own comments. It is a matter of extreme urgency and the comments by the Government House Leader (Mr. McCrae) shows that he just does not understand the urgency.

\* (1430)

I have to tell you that I thought two weeks ago the Liberal Opposition did not understand the urgency at that time. I believe it was as urgent then as it is today. I am pleased that the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer), my Leader, is seconding this motion because I believe it shows how Parties can work together in the best interests of this province.

But what we are talking about today in this resolution is the future of the Port of Churchill. When we agreed unanimously to an all-Party committee, we thought that, as the Government House Leader (Mr. McCrae) would suggest, we were gagging ourselves and preventing ourselves from ever being able to speak on the Port of Churchill in this House until that committee had completed its work, then I assure you we would not have agreed to that committee.

We agreed to that committee and the delegation, which I believe invariably will follow now to Ottawa, because we felt it was necessary to use every avenue, every vehicle, every instrument, every tool possible to us, to make certain that they understood, and more importantly that the federal Government understood exactly what the crisis is that confronts the Port of Churchill, the community of Gillam, the communities along the bayline in the entire Province of Manitoba.

So we, in agreeing to that committee, did not in any way pre-empt our need, our desire, or our ability to speak to this issue in this House and outside of this House in every way possible, on every occasion that allows for that to take place.

Over two weeks ago we put forward the emergency resolution. At that time the NDP expressed all the concerns that are expressed in the resolution today. I have to thank the Opposition House Leader (Mr. McCrae) for his cooperation in the way in which he approached this. As a matter of fact, the "WHEREASES" are almost 90 percent the same because the circumstances have not changed. They have not changed one iota in spite of the suggestions that the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) would talk to the Prime Minister, and he would pick up the phone and make a phone call, and there would be grain along the tracks flowing to Churchill, there would be ships flowing in, and all would be well with the Port of Churchill in the shipping season this year.

That did not happen. So then we worked to strike a committee with the unanimous consent of this entire Legislature. That committee was to meet specifically with representatives of the federal Government and representatives of the Canadian Wheat Board, among others.

On every occasion when we have attempted to meet with representatives of the Canadian Wheat Board,

including the Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, and representatives of the federal Government, including the Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board in that case as well, he has ducked the meeting. Today he refused to meet with the committee because it was a legislative committee. I have expressed concerns with the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger) about the fact that a formal committee may in fact preclude our ability to operate in a flexible manner to promote the use of the Port of Churchill and to urge the immediate shipment of grain to the Port of Churchill on every occasion, but they decided to go with that particular vehicle in any event.

We are starting to see some of the results of that formal committee and in not being able to meet with the Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board. But what we had two weeks ago was a lost opportunity. Since that time, carload upon carload upon carload of grain has been shipped from the Churchill catchment area, stolen from the Churchill catchment area, to be shipped through Thunder Bay or the west coast—taken right out from underneath the hands of the hardworking farmers who saved money by shipping through the Port of Churchill and shipped east and west to fulfill other commitments.

Well, there is a commitment that we all have to the Port of Churchill and each day that goes by, time becomes more crucial. There will become a point of no return very soon, when all the debate that we have in this House and all the lobbying we do will be to no avail because the window of opportunity will have shut on us. Before that window shuts we have to use every opportunity to carry forward that strong will on the part of at least this side of the House and I hope on the part of that side of the House—I know at least on the part of the Minister responsible—to ensure that the Canadian Wheat Board, the federal Government and all of Canada knows what is at stake here when grain is not being shipped to the Port of Churchill.

**Mr. Speaker:** First of all, let me thank all Honourable Members for their input, and it is indeed a very serious matter. Therefore, I am going to recess the House for 10 minutes because it is a very complex and difficult matter to deal with and I am going to recess for 10 minutes. So in 10 minutes from now, we will all be back in the Chamber.

\* (1440)

(RECESS)

\* (1450)

**Mr. Speaker:** I would like to thank all Honourable Members for their indulgence.

It has been moved by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs), seconded by the Honourable Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer),

WHEREAS the Port of Churchill is Canada's only northern sea port and a valuable asset to Manitoba, prairie farmers and the entire country; and

WHEREAS the federal Minister responsible for the Wheat Board has indicated that he will not take action to ensure that there will be an adequate shipping season this year at the Port of Churchill; and

WHEREAS, if this were to happen, it would create severe hardship for Churchill residents, their families, the business community and other communities along the bayline such as Gillam; and

WHEREAS grain that could be shipped through Churchill is being diverted to other points at greater expense to prairie farmers; and

WHEREAS the Conservative Government has failed to impress upon their counterparts in the federal Government the importance of the Port of Churchill and the need for continued shipments through Churchill this year; and

WHEREAS this Legislature has put aside partisan differences to support the Port of Churchill; and

WHEREAS there is an immediate requirement for a strong, united and pro-active defence of the Port of Churchill if we are able to salvage this year's shipping season; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, under Rule 27, that the ordinary business of the House be set aside to discuss a matter of urgent public importance; namely, the effects of the town of Churchill, Gillam, other communities on the bayline, northern Manitoba and the province as a whole, resulting from the apparent refusal by the Honourable Charlie Mayer, federal Minister responsible for the Wheat Board, to take action on behalf of the Port of Churchill.

As Honourable Members know, I must receive a minimum of one hour of prior notice on a matter of urgent public importance. I did receive that notice.

For the Speaker to be satisfied that the matter should be given priority over the regularly scheduled business of the House and debated immediately, there must be no other reasonable opportunity to address the matter. I believe, in this case, the subject matter could be addressed during the Budget Debate, which is now before the House, and during consideration of departmental Estimates, but not in the time the situation demands. Because the grain shipping season is well under way, I believe that this subject is one which is, in the words of Beauchesne, "so pressing that public interest will suffer if it is not given immediate attention."

I am satisfied that this matter raised today is sufficiently different from those raised in the House on July 27 and August 4. Therefore, I rule that the Honourable Member's motion is in order as a matter of urgent public importance. Therefore, the question before the House is shall the debate proceed? All those in favour, please say yea. All those opposed, please say nay. In my matter, the yeas have it.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

\* (1500)

**Mrs. Carstairs:** The decision to not ship grain through the Port of Churchill which has been apparently made

by the Wheat Board and a decision which appears to be acceptable to the Minister responsible for the Wheat Board, the Honourable Charlie Mayer, is one which I believe all Members of this House find to be very disturbing, disturbing because Churchill epitomizes for Manitoba what the Atlantic means to Nova Scotia, what the Pacific means to the Province of British Columbia. The motto of this country is: "A Mari Usque ad Mari," from sea even unto sea. It could have been rewritten to read: "A Mari Usque ad Mari et ad Mari," from sea unto sea unto sea. We too share a sea in this country of ours and that sea, of course, some regard it as an extension of the Atlantic Ocean and some regard it as an integral and independent sea unto its own. It certainly is as independent as the Mediterranean Sea is as far as the Atlantic Ocean is concerned.

The Town of Churchill rests in a northern area of this province and depends, to a very great degree, on the wheat shipments which the Honourable Member across the way has also referred to as a sea in terms of the sea of wheat.

My visit to Churchill last summer impressed upon me the importance of this community to our province as a whole. My tour of the port, including a visit to the elevators, impressed me with the capacity and the ability of this particular operation to service all of Canada and not just the Province of Manitoba. It was perhaps the visit to the school that impressed upon me the most the importance of Churchill because I asked the young students, who were in a Grade 9 class, why should we keep open the Port of Churchill. They found it difficult, which did not surprise me, because ninth graders are not usually too sophisticated in their information about the geographical dynamics of nations. Finally, one young boy said to me, we should keep it open because I like to live here. I thought, yes, that is a good reason, that is a valid reason for wanting to keep your community open.

I then took down for them a map of South America and I showed them, for example, the nation of Bolivia. I said, can you tell me what is uniquely different about that nation than the Canadian nation? It took them a little difficulty and a little bit of coaching, but finally they understood that what our country had was exits out of our country. We could exit and we could transport out of the Atlantic; we could exit and we could transport out of the Pacific; and we could exit and transport out of Hudson Bay. I stressed to them the importance of that in nation building, the importance of our national identity, the importance of our national security in having not just two but indeed three outlets.

At that same time, Mr. Speaker, I toured the hospital, and I was impressed with the first-class facility that was there at that particular time. It was therefore with some distress—and I raised it earlier to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard)—that it would appear that the Northwest Territories is considering moving some of the patients presently treated from the eastern Arctic in the Town of Churchill into Rankin Inlet. This would be a further blow to the community of Churchill, and I know that the Minister is going to meet with those in authority in the Northwest Territories in order to persuade them of the viability of the excellent facility

in the Town of Churchill and the necessity of their continued use of that facility for both medical and dental treatments.

But there have been other things that have recently moved out of the Town of Churchill. The Keewatin Regional Health Board, which used to function in the Town of Churchill, is now indeed functioning out of Rankin Inlet. This has meant that a number of employees have been required to either move to Rankin or other remote communities or have gone on the unemployment rolls in the Town of Churchill.

I also know that the aviation facilities in maintenance for aircraft that was located in Churchill is now located in Thompson. That, of course, is creating a very serious dilemma with regard to the complete and total viability of the Town of Churchill.

Therefore, the urgency of this debate today does not just impact on wheat and grain and where cereal grains are transferred and where they are going to exit this country from. It impacts very severely on the whole community of Churchill and the people who live within that community.

You know, numbers can always be used in a number of ways to convince one side or the other of their particular point of view or position. What we do know, however, is that Churchill has lacked vitality in terms of the economics of its grain shipment because of a lack of political will to ship a minimum of 750,000 tonnes of grain out of the Port of Churchill, because arguments that have been presented by farmers' organizations and by Wheat Board and by Port officials would indicate, without that level of shipment, then it becomes almost an uneconomic activity, this despite numerous activities that have gone on in the Port of Churchill to help make it a more profitable item.

For example, we know that, beginning last year, they shut the port down literally in the winter months and discovered that the pipes did not freeze, and that resulted in a major saving of the costs of the operations of the Port of Churchill.

But it is going to require that political will, that commitment of 750,000 tonnes, a commitment that I will willingly say has not been made by my Party nationally as well as not by the present Government nationally. It is that lack of political commitment that has prevented the Port from reaching the viability that it could reach if we had the political will to do so.

Mr. Speaker, the community of Churchill, the individuals who live in Churchill, deserve more from their national Government than they are presently receiving. The Premier in his remarks in Question Period today did talk about the cleaning facilities that have been added, the changeover in fuel that is being used at the Port of Churchill, and those expenditures of money are only valid if the grain is shipped. If there is no grain shipped, then why have we bothered to spend money on a facility which is not going to be used. Therefore, to justify those expenditures, it becomes inherent that we make sure that there are adequate shipments of grain out of the Port of Churchill.

\* (1510)

I was dismayed on two counts this morning, first, that the Honourable Charles Mayer, knowing that there was a legislative committee, chose not to meet with that legislative committee. I also was somewhat disappointed that the chairman of that committee would have chosen to meet himself, and did not deny that meeting in light of the fact that the Minister was unwilling to meet with the committee as a whole. Because I have strong admiration for the Minister of Transport, I can only assume that he did what he believed to be was in the best interests of Churchill and the people of Manitoba. So my criticism is gentle, because of my admiration of this particular individual, but I do believe that the Minister erred when he refused to meet. Thank you.

**Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation):** I have a few things that I would like to put on the record. I think, on listening to the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) speak, I do not want to be overly critical either but the complex business of the Port of Churchill—and the movement of grain through this is very complex and I do not know whether she fully understands it because it has taken me quite some time to become acquainted with that. I think possibly a lot of her colleagues probably do not fully understand. There are many, many factors that are involved in the movement of grain through the Port of Churchill, and I have become aware of most of them at this stage of the game.

I want to, first of all, indicate that the role that we are playing in this Legislature and with the committee that was struck, which I was supportive in terms of forming that committee—I felt they had a mandate to try and influence the federal Government and the Wheat Board, but I have to stress that the role that we play is only a lobby role. We have no power to force any Wheat Board or the federal Government, for that matter, to make any decisions in this regard. That is the key here.

When we talk of having an emergency debate about it, I felt that what we had done last Thursday by forming that committee, that we were on the right process. We met on Tuesday with some of the people involved, some of the authorities involved and, subsequent to that, we were going to be meeting with the federal Minister, hopefully tomorrow, along with the Chairman of the Wheat Board. What happened consequently to that is that I got called later in the afternoon, late evening, by the Minister's office, indicating that he did not have any intentions—we had proceeded to try, through staff, to make contact, to make sure that he could attend the meeting. He indicated that he was willing to come and meet with myself at eleven o'clock this morning, together with the Chairman of the Wheat Board.

My first concern had to be, as chairman of the committee, that the preference should be to meet with the committee. I feel very strongly about that. He, at that time or his staff at that time, did not indicate that he would or would not meet with the committee, but he wanted to meet with myself at that time together with the Chairman of the Wheat Board. So the request had been made to meet, to come on Friday. When he indicated that he was coming today, I felt that it was

my responsibility, as Minister responsible for Transportation and the chairman of the committee, that I should meet.

I can indicate to all Members of this House that the first question when I saw the Minister when he came into my office was are you prepared to meet tomorrow with the committee and, at that stage of the game, the discussions started. It was my intention, in view of the fact that we now have an emergency debate, the report that I was going to give to the committee might as well be indicated to all Members of the House right now, because I think we, to some degree, scuttled the efforts of the committee by the process taking place right now. It is my understanding that Members from the N.D. Party are meeting with the federal Minister right now and that, subsequently, Members from the Liberal Party will be meeting with the federal Minister.

So, in a sense, we have scuttled the effectiveness of the committee. That is the most unfortunate thing, because I was very concerned about the role of the committee. The media, who I had not informed, but when the media were there right after the meeting with Mr. Mayer, I indicated that I was not in a position to make any statements about the meeting until I reported to my committee. I felt very strongly about that because I feel that, if we are going to set up a committee, an all-Party committee, then we should honour that role and try to work within that.

I make no apologies for the fact that I did meet with the Minister at eleven o'clock, because my intention was to get an indication from him that he would meet with us as a committee next day. It is his choice whether he meets with the committee or not. He indicated publicly to the media that he has not been meeting with any of the provincial committees to date and he had no intentions of doing so. That is his choice. He is accountable for that. My responsibility was to the committee.

I really feel in a quandary as to how the committee will function from hereon in. As a chairman, I felt I was compelled to meet with the federal Minister responsible, together with the Chairman of the Wheat Board. They asked to meet with me; regardless, I should meet with them. But with what we have done to this point in time now, I feel that the committee has been—what is the role of the committee after this? Individually, we will have all met. The Opposition Members will have met with the federal Minister, have had their discussion. They can influence and lobby as we all have done.—(Interjection)— That is his prerogative. But what is the role of the committee? You know, there has to be some direction. We have a meeting called for two o'clock tomorrow afternoon, and I would hope that the Members who are on the committee will honour that meeting and we should decide whether there is any role for us to play any further.

The unfortunate thing is that I hope that we are not trying to play politics with this game because, when we passed that resolution on Thursday, it was an all-Party committee that we formed because we were sincerely concerned about trying to influence the movement of grain through the Port of Churchill. The intricacies of getting that grain moving through there,

in my discussions with the federal Minister and with the Chairman of the Wheat Board, was that there are at the present time no buyers available. They are actively pursuing the aspect of trying to get buyers to get grain through the Port of Churchill. They have no buyers at the present time.

I might also add that the one big buyer that we had through the Port of Churchill in the past was Poland. Because of financial obligations that are in limbo—and maybe I am starting an international issue here—and they owe a tremendous amount of money and, for that reason, the grain is not being sold to them. So, there are many players in this game and we have to become aware of that.

The other thing is that the Wheat Board is a non-political body. The Minister responsible indicated that he will not interfere politically with the Wheat Board in this particular case because he has had lobby groups from all across Canada, from all the ports, wanting guarantees as we do. I felt that our role in terms of lobbying so that we at least kept our presence felt all the time was a proper role to play. We have done—I do not know what else I could have done or my Leader could have done in terms of bringing home the importance of having grain moved through the Port of Churchill. The economic impact, we are trying to assess the total impact of that.

The one assurance that I got out of the Minister responsible for the Wheat Board, he indicated that the port will stay open. In fact, I had a commitment, and I mentioned that the other day, that over \$3 million will be spent between '88-89, '89-90 in terms of renovations. The people who would normally maybe, if there was no movement that would be laid off, that half of them will be employed renovating and doing the changes to the dust control, including the renovations from conversion from steam heat to electric heat. It is not a total disaster, but I am not happy with that. The only thing is I cannot get the customers to buy the grain—through the Port of Churchill—for the Wheat Board.

The other element that we have not addressed at all is that the farmers are involved in this thing and the Wheat Board, their mandate is to sell the grain for the farmers at the best possible price. This is their responsibility. If they have buyers to come that want the grain picked up from the West Coast, they are fools if they do not sell it at the best price that they can get.

Mr. Speaker, you are indicating to me that my time has run out. There are many things that I think possibly—maybe my voice is running out, too—have to be put on the record in terms of the process. I challenge all Members of this House to try and become acquainted with what the process is. It is not just a matter of political desire, we have that. There is much more than that involved to understand what the process is in terms of getting grain through the Port of Churchill. Thank you.

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to speak, and I applaud you for your ruling today in terms of this important issue facing Manitobans.

I would say at this point that I believe and our Party believes that the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger) for the Province of Manitoba is doing everything he possibly can do on this very important issue as a Minister of the Crown. I believe that very sincerely.

Mr. Speaker, what I am worried about is the timidity and the lack of forthright and strong action on behalf of Manitobans in this Legislature and, indeed, of Manitobans on this very important issue on the Port of Churchill by the Premier. I watched a couple of days ago, where we found out that Mr. Mayer was meeting in the evening of the same day when the all-Party committee was supposed to deal with this issue and indeed, the federal Minister of Transport would not lower himself to meet with the all-Party committee.

I thought it was unfortunate for the Minister of Transportation that the Premier did not insist that the federal Minister stay around for a couple of hours so that all of us could meet and fulfill the obligation of the resolution. Again today, not only is our provincial Minister of Transportation left high and dry by Mr. Mayer's statements, which I know must have ran shivers down the back of the Minister when he read it this morning or heard it in the media this morning, but then he has to deal with the federal Minister who will only meet with him and will not meet with the all-Party committee. In fact, he is going around this building right now wanting to meet with each of us separately.

We have missed the point of the whole resolution. We wanted to show in the best way we could that, indeed, we were united on this issue to the federal Government, to the federal Minister, and to support the Premier in his position of lobbying with the Prime Minister, whom he called, "the highest authority in the land."

\* (1520)

We wanted to show the united voice. The Minister responsible for the Wheat Board has said no to that, and I believe we have a major problem with the federal Minister responsible for the Wheat Board. When the Minister was formerly a federal Member of Parliament and in the short-lived Joe Clark Government, Mr. Murta stated that the Port of Churchill was a luxury we could not afford. At that point I believe that I heard comments of a similar vein from Mr. Mayer in that Government. In fact, it required a federal Cabinet Minister, Mr. Mazankowski in 1979 to overrule that kind of sentiment in the short-lived Joe Clark Government. The same kind of comments are coming out of Mr. Mayer, the federal Minister today, a whole negative position on this whole area.

I would remind the House that the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) stated, "I do not think that one can take this issue to any higher authority in this country and that is what I have just done today." From Hansard, July 28, "I laid before the Prime Minister our concerns about the continued use and emphasis on the Port of Churchill. I told him there was a concern about the shipment of grain, that there were other concerns to ensure that Churchill remains a viable entity, and that as a port it remains in a very important function in Canada's ports."



The Prime Minister made a commitment that he would look into the matter personally. These are the assurances we received 16 days ago and I believe strongly that this all-Party committee should have met with the federal Minister. I agree with the provincial Minister that he cannot compel the federal Minister to meet with our all-Party committee.

There is one person who can compel him to do so and that is the Prime Minister of the land, the person who the First Minister spoke to, the person who our First Minister met with some 16 days ago. There is an authority to whom Mr. Mayer reports to. There is an authority that can call him to task for ignoring the all-Party united committee that was passed in this Legislature.

That is why I was very surprised that the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) this morning did not—when chills went down his spine, as I am sure they did, did not pick up the phone—and I do not want to be cute about the debate—but did not pick up the phone on behalf of Manitobans and the Port of Churchill, did not pick up the phone on behalf of his Minister who was left out of a meeting I understand—not entirely, but there was a meeting the other night and he was not allowed to pursue the all-Party committee and again the federal Minister will only meet with each of us separately, which is totally contrary to the resolution.

I feel for the Minister, and I believe the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) should be strident on this issue on behalf of Manitobans. I believe in federal-provincial cooperation. I believe in quiet diplomacy. I believe using the quiet way wherever possible. Indeed, I even tried to do it with the City of Winnipeg and was successful one out of ten times when we had important issues.

You try to use whatever means possible in a quiet, non-confrontative way. When the federal Minister undercuts your provincial Minister, when the federal Minister is not acting in a way that is consistent with all Manitobans in terms of the Port of Churchill, it is time for the First Minister to speak up on behalf of Manitobans, to speak up on behalf of this the united committee; to go to the boss of the federal Minister and get the meeting that Manitobans and, indeed, this Legislature unanimously agreed to a week-and-a-half ago. That is what I would want to see out of this resolution.

I do not want to see a lot of fancy speeches and great theories and whatever else on this issue and then let it die next week. We will not let it die and it has nothing to do with politics really. We have nothing to do with politics in terms of this issue. I know Members opposite, if they had a problem on a federal provincial situation, they would have demanded us, and rightly so, to call the Prime Minister. When you cannot resolve these issues with Minister to Minister and Government to Government at a ministerial level, then it is the absolute responsibility of the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) to not be timid, to not just walk away and some rhetoric in this House, but to guarantee Manitobans that he would pick up the phone on behalf of his Minister and, indeed, on behalf of this House and have the Prime Minister overrule the Minister of the Wheat Board who does not want to meet with the all-parliamentary

committee. He wants to skirt the process that was passed in this House.

So, Mr. Speaker, there are people who know more than I do about the cost and the catchment area. I have spent time at Churchill. I have read the 1986 report on the cost in dealing with this issue. But the real issue is when the federal Minister of the Wheat Board leaves our Transportation Minister (Mr. Albert Driedger) high and dry in terms of meeting with the all-legislative committee.

I believe our First Minister (Mr. Filmon) should get hold of our Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) and have the Prime Minister overrule the Minister responsible for the Wheat Board and have that Minister meet with us so he can deal with all these facts, figures, issues and complexities, which I agree with, with our Minister of Transportation.

We can deal with all the complexities consistent with the spirit of this resolution and consistent with the unanimous approval of the 57 Members. So, Mr. Speaker, I would plea with the First Minister of this province to pick up the phone this afternoon, to phone the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) to have the Prime Minister overrule his Minister responsible for the Wheat Board (Mr. Mayer).

It is not such a bad thing. We have all been overruled before as Ministers. I am sure all Members in this House and in Cabinet have been overruled—oh, I am sure Albert was overruled on the toll ways—and I think that is part of being in Cabinet, Government, with a Premier, and I respect that. I respect being accountable to my boss. I have always respected that and I respect the fact that our First Minister should indeed phone the Prime Minister of this country, the boss of the Minister responsible for the Wheat Board and overrule this unilateral and whimsical decision not to meet with the Manitobans and indeed with all of us in this province. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** I want to first comment on the remarks of the Leader of the Second Opposition (Mr. Doer). It is sort of the beatings of a lamb being led to slaughter when he has the gall to stand in this House and tell us that it is not a political issue when he is sporting on his lapel a button which has support on it "Sponsored by the NDP Association of Churchill." If that is not playing politics with the Port of Churchill by the NDP and the de facto Leader of the New Democratic Party, the Member for Concordia, I do not know what is—like a lamb to the slaughter, this man continues.

Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the Leader of the Opposition I used to respect him as well.—(Interjection)—I am sorry. I used to respect the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer). I am not sure about the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs).

This issue is larger than simply Churchill in the shipping season today. The issue is whether Churchill indeed has a rightful role in the shipment of grain internationally. What is fundamental to that issue is the mandate of the sole selling agency for grains produced on the Prairies which would access the Port of Churchill.

That sole selling authority is the Canadian Wheat Board. The Canadian Wheat Board's mandate, for those of you who are not aware of it, is to maximize the returns to their customers, which are the farmers and the producers in western Canada and the Peace River region of British Columbia.

\* (1530)

My honourable friends fail to recognize that fundamental point and they are using my colleague in Ottawa, the Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, as a political football in this one. It is good politics but it belies the understanding of the role of the Canadian Wheat Board because the Canadian Wheat Board cannot be subject to political interference. If that is what you Members in the Liberal Party and the New Democratic Party want, what you will see if the Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board bows to political pressures on where the Wheat Board ought to ship grain, let me assure you, the political pressures are there to close Churchill and the grain trade. If you want a Minister that bows to political pressures, that is a greater political pressure than what is being exerted by this House today by the grain trade who do not want to use the Port of Churchill. So if you are asking the Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board to politically interfere with its mandate and ship grain when there are no customers who wish to pick up grain in the Port of Churchill, then you are asking for political interference to rule the Canadian Wheat Board and potentially close it forever.

That is not a goal that I support or any Member of this Party supports in this House, but that is the natural flow of what you are doing today by insisting on political interference. Now, my honourable friend, the Ag critic (Mr. Laurie Evans) for the Liberals shakes his head, and I hope it was not in disagreement with what I have just said, because I think he has a higher understanding of the role of the Canadian Wheat Board than saying what I have just put on the record is not true.

The Wheat Board mandate is to maximize the returns to the grain producer. It is also mandated to offer, for sale, grains at four ports, primarily four ports: Thunder Bay, Churchill, Vancouver and Prince Rupert, offers grains FOB from those ports and indeed from Montreal, Baie-Comeau and the St. Lawrence lower grain handling. If you offer grain for sale, FOB Churchill, and no one comes to buy it, not even grain given away by CIDA is being picked up at Churchill, what you are saying is the Minister ought then to politically interfere. I point out to you the grave difficulties you put him in, in the future, and the Canadian Wheat Board in the future, if you allow that kind of political interference.

In saying that I am not defending no shipments through Churchill. I have supported Churchill in the 11 years that I have been a Member of this Legislature. My statements can in no way be misconstrued, as they are wont to be from time to time in this House, but by saying what I have just said, I am not in support of Churchill as a grain shipping port. But we have to understand the mechanics of getting grain shipped from that port. This resolution does not reflect that.

We have, Mr. Mayer, as the Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, being used as the political

kicking post in this current debate. That was the flaw with the resolution we passed last Thursday unanimously. We can strike a committee within this Legislature, we can request meetings, we can request the attendance of various people, but nobody has to attend, outside of the purview of this Chamber. Mr. Mayer has offered to meet individually with your caucuses and is trying to do so. That may not satisfy you today. It may not satisfy the intent of the resolution, but why are you afraid to meet with him? Why would you not meet with him? Why would you not listen to Mr. Mayer? Because you want to use him as a political kicking post, that is all. It is as simple as that.

You think you have an issue, the Leader of the NDP (Mr. Doer) tried to say it was a non-political issue, wearing a Churchill NDP Association button—some non-political approach to the issue. I mean that belies his argument. There might be some integrity on the part of the Official Opposition in some of the arguments they make, but the Leader of the NDP has destroyed his credibility wearing that button today.

I simply want to also indicate that this debate is much bigger than simply Churchill, and the Port of Churchill, and the movement of grain this summer. It is important for this Legislature to put on the record the difficulties that any grain shipping port will have when grain is not available for shipment through it for whatever reason. And what that does to the community in that particular port and, more importantly—because I think that is what we are here to really debate—that lack of movement of grain through any port in the system, what that does to the farmers of the Provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and B.C. Mr. Speaker, that is why I am going to propose an amendment to this resolution.

What we want to talk about here is not simply the difficulties Churchill is encountering here today, but let us talk about the difficulties that Churchill may well have in the future if there is a strike by its workers and the grain cannot move or if there is a strike in the rail system so that grain does not move to that port. What impact does that have on those people in Churchill?

My honourable friends, when we were in Government in 1979, I believe, we suffered a strike at Churchill where grain did not move. I did not hear the New Democratic Party in Opposition in those days bringing in an emergency resolution to discuss the potential of that lack of movement of grain in Churchill because of a strike in 1979. Not a peep was said. So the issue is not the people at the ports; the issue is not the impact on the farmers. This is a political issue by the NDP.

I simply want to move so that we can discuss complete terms, the ability and the difficulty caused by lack of movement of grain for whatever reason, so that we can talk on this in a total context, not the temporary problem that we have today in the Port of Churchill.

I would simply move that the resolution be amended by striking out all words appearing after "namely" in the THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED and replace those words with the following:

"The effects on any port, including the Port of Churchill, when there is an absence of grain movement

for whatever reason, and that this House do now consider the effects on the community in which that port may be located and on the farm community in general."

That is seconded by my honourable friend, the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger).

### POINT OF ORDER

**Mr. Reg Alcock (Opposition House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

My understanding is that the motion has already been passed and therefore is not amendable. The motion was to have the debate and that motion has been passed by this House or been found to be in order by yourself.

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, on the point of order.

What we agreed to was that an emergency debate ought to proceed. The resolution is before us. That resolution is subject to debate, and during debate, is subject to amendment, which I have just proposed. That is the purpose of debating a resolution is to amend it so it better reflects the urgency of the situation and the long-term implications of grain not moving through any port. That is the exact intent of my amendment and I wish support of all Members of the House to deal with the broader issue which may well affect Thunder Bay one year, Vancouver another year, Prince Rupert another year; but, more importantly, when it does affect those ports, it seriously affects the farm community, and that is who I am here to represent and protect.

\* (1540)

**Mr. Storie:** Mr. Speaker, on the point of order.

I do not believe the Member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard) has a point of order. I believe his motion is totally out of order and it is quite obvious that with the concurrence of the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger), this debate is trying to be sidelined. The real issue is trying to be diminished in some way by this attempt.

The fact of the matter is that there are many other people who want to speak on this particular matter and I would suggest that the House get on with it.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Manitoba's rules relating to matters of urgent public importance do not specifically address the matter of whether or not amendments may be made to such motions. Research undertaken has identified no prior Speakers' Rulings on this question. In unprovided cases, the Rules of the House refer us to the usage and customs of the House of Commons as in force at the time.

Our Rule 27 is worded almost identically to the relevant House of Commons Standing Order No. 26. The House of Commons Standing Order does not prohibit amendments but their practice does. Before

a matter of urgent public importance is debated in this House, the House decides whether debate shall proceed. It should not then be possible for the question the House has agreed to debate to be superseded. Therefore, with respect, I am obliged to rule the Honourable Member's amendment out of order.

**Mr. Herold Driedger (Niakwa):** I confess some puzzlement here and I attribute that puzzlement directly due to my relative lack of experience with the Rules of the House, but I think what I will do is try to address myself to the urgency of the debate as we originally wanted to do.

I also wish to confess to the House that I had, in the past week, expressed some delight at my small part in having the all-Party resolution, the all-Member committee, struck as of last Thursday. I felt then, as I still do now, that that was a correct course of action.

The fact that we did not engage in an emergency debate at that time, I think I can attribute—if you play chess—to a similar strategy. In chess, you do not advance with your queen—

**An Honourable Member:** Obviously, you have not played.

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** I have played, my friend. I have played. You do not advance with your queen; you actually have to clear a rank through the front line of pawns first. So, essentially, what we did with the first resolution was to establish a strategy which advanced a certain path that we wanted to take.

We had, of course, the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) in Ottawa speaking to the Prime Minister. We felt we had to hear what he had to say. We passed an all-Party resolution, a private Member's resolution, to strike an all-Party committee which subsequently was insulted by the federal Government when the honourable federal Minister refused to meet or even indicate that he was willing to meet with this committee.

It is now, though, time to address the issue and send a stronger message to Ottawa because, as the Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) indicated, there are compelling economic reasons from time to time which are addressed by other concerns that Churchill itself may not be used at one point in time or another. I wish to bring to the attention of this House that there are also compelling reasons why the very same economic reasons should be put aside for other reasons of more urgency and crisis.

When we decided to support this committee, and I recall the remarks of the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger) about what role shall this committee now play. I wish to call his attention to the fact that this committee actually was to also look at long-term benefits, long-term use of the Port of Churchill and, in that respect, we actually have to go forward with both, not only this debate but the committee as well. It is not just sufficient to indicate that this is the last kick at the cat that we have. We have a lot more.

The actual purpose of this resolution is to urge the federal Minister responsible for the Wheat Board to

take action on behalf of the Port of Churchill. Whether that particular action is precisely now to move grain in the long term or short term, I think we have to leave it to the decision of, well there is the Wheat Board, other people as well. But the bottom line is action that is going to see to the survival of the port in one respect or another.

We noticed how important ports are to countries. Some time ago, we saw the Soviet Union get involved in a small altercation in Afghanistan because they wished to have another port on the Indian Ocean, Afghanistan. Then there is the Province of Pakistan just to the south of it, in which there was also some activity of political unrest that would have permitted a nice action to the sea, and here we have a country devoting its entire energies to achieving an end.

In this country, Churchill, on the other hand, does not seem to derive the same degree of urgency by anybody. We have the statement by the federal Government, in view of the fact it is spending money to upgrade facilities, spending money to see to it that the activity does not completely go down to a standstill. That is being done, but no grain is being shipped.

In our situation, the Port of Churchill's viability is determined by the amount of grain it ships, not by the amount of money that is being spent there to upgrade facilities. Until the decision of the Canadian Government is such that we recognize the strategic value of Churchill, we will find that these stopgap measures will not be sufficient. We have to find economic activity that will actually generate further activity, which will end up justifying the port's existence. We cannot keep on throwing up spurious arguments and say, well it is uneconomic to ship grain. By any stretch of the imagination, by looking at numbers, one number or another, you can say it is uneconomic to ship grain.

I have heard statements saying that actually the operating costs of Churchill can be covered by shipping grain; that is true. We have heard that the cost of sea-delivered grain being shipped by ocean freighter is \$20 to \$30 a tonne cheaper than through Thunder Bay; that is also true. But what is not mentioned in those particular arguments is the fact that, in our case, the infrastructure, the rail line, the upkeep of the rail line, the maintenance of Churchill itself must be supported by the people who actually transmit the grain. That, I think, is not necessarily a fair way of looking at the situation.

No less a personage than Jack Horner, in a recent conversation with me, indicated to me that shipping grain through Churchill can be economic provided that we do not expect that grain or the shipment of that grain to support all the other reasons why that port must be kept open, all the other reasons why the bayline must be kept moving. In fact, he stated that it is quite possible to dedicate Churchill to be a specific commodity port, grain-wise. That would be sufficient to satisfy the grain interest, and would also enable us to ship grain reasonably cheaply, competitively, against the Seaway, provided the port did not have to pick up the other costs.

\* (1550)

Just in keeping with the argument of other costs, if I may draw the attention to the House, that in these overall costs that are attributed to the Churchill line, we tend to have the arguments thrown against Churchill that it would cost too much, it is losing money. But I just wish to draw the attention of the House to the fact that the 1986-87 actual Seaway costs—and this is the cost of using the St. Lawrence Seaway—had a net operating loss of \$8.986 million. When they subtracted some of the other little incomes that they sort of add to that, the investment incomes, the actual net income loss was over \$4 million. They project this particular loss to continue right through to late 1993. So to say that Churchill is losing money because other areas are making money is a spurious argument.

I think we have to recognize that, in this instance, there are other agendas that need to be served. The St. Lawrence Seaway must be kept operational, the St. Lawrence Seaway must remain competitive. You cannot ship all the grain that we have to deliver to the rest of the world through Churchill. At best, it might be able to ship 3 percent of our exports.—(Interjection)—We are not going to be shipping any of that, but let me finish my argument, please.

If you are already going to have other reasons why you are maintaining an operation, the Seaway with its loss, Churchill with its loss, because of strategic importances, if you are not going to come up with another economic activity that can counter that particular operation that you are sending through the port, then for heaven's sakes utilize what you do have. We are simply asking for a small movement of grain, the same percentage that was entered into in the agreement between the former Government and the federal Government—time? One minute? Okay, I will hurry—which indicated that Churchill should have at least 3 percent of the total country's shipments. Since grain is still expected to carry its fair share of the costs of Churchill and the support for Churchill and the benefits to Churchill, then let us have that same 3 percent being shipped this year, regardless of the other arguments that can be addressed because of some potential loss to other parts of the country. Remember, we are Manitobans first here. We have to look to the needs of Manitoba, bottom line. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I am happy to be able to rise and debate the resolution. Let me make two points to begin. First of all, I find it incredible that Members of the Official Opposition would stand today and say that this is an important issue to them. The Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs), in her address to the Budget, did not mention it once. This is an issue that has been talked about for some period of time in the address to the Budget.

I have not heard a question come across the floor from the Leader of the Opposition specific to this since the all-Party committee was mandated to do certain things. The Leader of the Opposition says, she made this point—and it is what I was really searching for when she presented her views. I wanted to see what action she wanted taken. As close as she would commit herself to providing for a course of action that she

hoped would be followed, she said words to this effect, make sure that there are adequate shipments. That means to me that the Leader of the Opposition was saying, Canadian Wheat Board, you should be directed to allocate a certain share.

Now, if I am wrong, I would expect Members of the Opposition to stand in their places after me to say that no, I put a wrong interpretation into the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs).

The Leader of the NDP (Mr. Doer) said, "Call the Prime Minister." He said, "Do that." Yet, very carefully, as I listened to his remarks, the Leader of the NDP did not seem to be saying, "Call the Prime Minister to overrule the Canadian Wheat Board." He seemed to be saying, "Call the Prime Minister to overrule the Minister in charge of the Wheat Board so that he will sit down with the committee." That is probably a pretty safe ground to stand on because there is a big, big, big difference, a massive difference, as my colleague may have found out. I will tell you why there is a big difference.

The Member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard) probably captured it best, but I want to restate some of the points that he made. It has something to do with the politics in the grain industry. For years, politics has been involved in that industry and people would argue, much to the shortcoming of Churchill, that Churchill has been one of the losers as to the politics in the grain industry. There is more than an element of truth in that.

Since I became intimate with Churchill when I worked at the Canada Grains Council back in 1973 to 1975, I am well aware of the forces at work that have mitigated against Churchill expanding and growing. I could lay some of that blame, I suppose, at the Dominion Marine Association and also at the Canadian National Railways.

But I think that if we recognize that there are politics in the grain industry, the worst thing that we can do in this House is try and take politics and force them onto the Canadian Wheat Board, because there is one beacon, there is one standard that has risen above 70 years of politics in the grain industry—and it has its problems, too—the Canadian Wheat Board.

There was a time in the late Seventies it had to be challenged. It had to be challenged and we have a Member sitting on the front bench that challenged it. But through all those years, since 1935, the Canadian Wheat Board, for the most part, has remained outside of the politics that can rage within the grain industry. The worst thing that this House can do is direct the Prime Minister and direct a Minister in charge of the Wheat Board to put a political decision in effect. That is just about the worst thing to do.

**An Honourable Member:** Why did the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) raise it with the Prime Minister?

**Mr. Manness:** Well, there is nothing wrong. That is his mandate, naturally. Ultimately, the agency comes under the Prime Minister, but the decision as to whether or not a person uses that power to mandate that the Canadian Wheat Board do certain things is a dangerous,

dangerous and a powerful weapon that once you use, you do not know how it is going to come back, not only to the detriment of yourself but, more importantly, the detriment of the farmers of western Canada. That is what is at issue here.

At least I give the Leader of the NDP (Mr. Doer) some credit because he chose his words carefully. He did not direct, in his contribution to the resolution, that we, through our good offices, impress upon the Prime Minister that he direct the Canadian Wheat Board to do certain things. No, he said that the Prime Minister should direct the Minister in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board to meet with the selected committee. That is fair, and with that I support him.

\* (1600)

But the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) went a step further. She said, in essence, make sure that there are adequate shipments. She did not specify how. She did not specify by what formula, she said just make sure.

I can imagine the outcry there would be and there may still be. I do not know the thinking in the Prime Minister's Office. If a former Member of Parliament—

**Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James):** You are right.

**Mr. Manness:** I have got the neophyte from St. James, the political neophyte, telling me I am right. I am not as all knowledgeable as he is. I do not pretend to know what is going on in the Prime Minister's Office. He probably does. But how would the Members opposite scream and yell if the Prime Minister's Office decided to appoint a former Member of Parliament to be a Commissioner on the Canadian Wheat Board? From where would the loudest screams emanate? I know where—from the benches opposite.

I say on this issue that it is very important that we be very careful and we choose our words carefully and the directives that we give not only to our Minister but to the federal Ministers and indeed the Prime Minister. Saying that, though, within the opportunity that the Canadian Wheat Board has, within the very narrow focus that they have to make decisions that ultimately provide the maximization of revenues to the Canadian wheat farmer, but to the extent that there is leeway there, I hope they will favour Churchill, because as Churchill has made a commitment as a port to the well-being of our province and our nation over years past, it will also continue to do so in the future.

Now some would say how? I do not know how. I see my light is flashing. How much time do I have left, Mr. Speaker? I have got a minute-and-a-half. I would only make this point. Grain is unreliable. The dynamics associated with the grain industry are unpredictable, and today when things look so gloomy, I honestly believe that in 5 or 8 or 10 years that things will look rosier. Churchill not only will have a future but will have a permanent place in the grain delivery system based on a greater economic force.

We are happy to associate ourselves with the resolution. We wish that it had come in on a different

method. We are happy to associate ourselves with the resolution.

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** I would like to join with others in debating this resolution, and start off by saying that I appreciated the last comments of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) that he would associate himself with the spirit of the resolution. I trust that at the end of the debate, the message will go out loud and clear to the people of Manitoba, and particularly to the people of Canada, and most especially to the federal Government, that this Legislature stands united in its support of Churchill and its desire to have the federal Government use its wealth, use its power to enhance that particular port.

The criticisms that have been made by the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and perhaps one or two others on the Government side in respect of Churchill and the need to put grain through it seems to relate to the fact that somehow or other it is uneconomic to ship grain through Churchill. It would be on the backs of the farmers and therefore the farmers would be unhappy and so on.

I do not think we can accept those positions. Over the years we have had the Hudson Bay Railway Association make its views known very well to all of the prairie Governments and to the federal Government that there is a need to continue to enhance Churchill. There is a need; there is a role for it to play. I do not know what the solution is, but the fact is there is frustration in this House, particularly on this side of the House, with the way Mr. Mayer has handled this matter. He does not seem to be taking it very seriously. He seems to be rather insensitive to the whole matter. I am particularly concerned because of the answers given by the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) today in questioning from my own Leader with regard to up-to-date action on his part, given the statements made by Mr. Mayer.

Perhaps this has been referred to before but it is important to note again that, in Hansard, July 28, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) in speaking, said that he had spoken to the Prime Minister and expressed his concern about the continued use and emphasis of Port of Churchill: "I told him that there was a concern about the shipment of grain, that there were other concerns to ensure that Churchill remains a viable entity, and that as a port it remains in a very important function in Canada's ports. Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister made a commitment that he would look into the matter personally."

Well, Mr. Speaker, this is a quote from remarks made by our Premier on July 28 in Hansard. I say that was some days ago, about a couple weeks ago, and what has happened since then. Instead, we have the Minister responsible for the Wheat Board talking and acting in a very insensitive manner as though there have been no conversations take place between the Premier (Mr. Filmon) of this province and the Prime Minister, or that the Prime Minister had not indicated that he would look into this matter personally.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that we are all concerned, we should all be concerned about the long-term

development in future, and it requires a lot of commitment by Government, particularly the federal Government, also I would suggest the provincial Government, the provincial Government in particular in regard to playing an advocacy role. Governments have tried to use this. I know my colleague, the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), has worked very hard and successfully over the years when he was Minister responsible for transportation policy.

When I was the Minister of Industry and Commerce in the Schreyer administration, I had the opportunity to be involved in transportation policy, and I can say that we got a lot done in those years. In the Seventies, we got a lot done. We got a lot done with the cooperation of the federal Government then, Mr. Jean Marchand, the federal Minister. There were certain major port improvements that took place, not only dredging but actual improvements to the port itself. We managed to get a tug and barge operation set up. Before that time, supplying of the outports in the Hudson Bay was out of the City of Montreal, and we felt that there was an opportunity here for more activity from Churchill. It would put traffic through the City of Winnipeg over the railways in Manitoba, and indeed we were successful in getting the federal Government to do this. The tug and barge operation, I believe, is still in operation today.

Another matter that happened is rather symbolic. In 1970, the Canadian Coast Guard brought in one of its vessels to celebrate our Centennial and attempted to get into port in early December. It was not successful, because of the built-up ice with the wind but, nevertheless, there was that effort made.

The province in turn spent a great deal of money in making sure that the town was a liveable place and it could improve the quality of life for its residents. There was a massive program of public housing built at that time, using NHA money but also provincial monies as well. There was a fantastic development in housing at that time. In fact, I think the whole town was virtually rebuilt in terms of residences.

Research projects were funded through the Manitoba Research Council. Health programs were expanded. We lobbied with the insurance industry to try to get better terms so that vessels could come from Europe or from wherever later in the year, and take the risk that they may tag with regard to ice, but we did try our best to get the insurance companies to liberalize their insurance policies.

\* (1610)

We tried to get other forms of products through the port. I remember specifically at one point, we actually did get sulphur shipped through the port. There were huge mounds of sulphur. I do not know whether everybody appreciated it, especially when it was a windy day, but we had tonnes and tonnes of sulphur in the Port of Churchill, and it did get shipped out of there. Well there are other opportunities, but I am saying the province has a role to play in advocating and promoting and making sure that we have adequate infrastructure.

There is a role for the Alberta and Saskatchewan Governments to play, and indeed we were successful

in persuading both the Province of Alberta and the Province of Saskatchewan to go with us in setting up the Port of Churchill Development Board. That board has played a very significant role over the years in enhancing activity in that particular port. There was the interprovincial cooperation. As I said, under the Pawley administration, I know my colleagues then, the Minister of Transportation and Highways, the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), worked very hard in lobbying for port improvement, railway improvement, grain shipments and so on.

I think, Mr. Speaker, in many ways, we are talking about a major problem of northern economic development. When this country was being built and when the powers that be considered construction of railways across the country, including the CPR which was the first railway, I do not think anyone looked to see whether there was a market there, exactly how much was to be shipped, what commodities and so on. The construction of the CPR was built as a matter of nation building. It was constructed as a part of a national plan to develop an economy from sea to sea. The CPR would never have been built if you took a short-term commercial view of what amount of traffic the CPR would get within a couple of years and so on.

I say construction and development of Churchill in the future, Churchill is part and parcel of this challenge of nation building. We have spent millions of dollars in Canada's North for military purposes, for northern research and so on. The federal Government has spent millions of dollars on all kinds of questions. The present Government has spent millions of dollars on a lot of questionable projects around the country, particularly in Quebec. I can think of one or two, millions of dollars virtually being spent.

I say, Mr. Speaker, we do not want to mispend money, but I say there have been many, many expensive projects in northern Manitoba. How many federal ports have lost money? How many millions of dollars have been spent on federal port development. I say there is room here for imagination. There is room for commitment by the federal Government with support of the provincial Governments in the West to develop Churchill as part of northern Canadian development. It is a long-term challenge, but it is one that we have to take.

There are all kinds of specific suggestions one could come up with. You talk about the cost of shipping, well have you heard of developmental railway rates before? In fact, they have been used in the Maritimes and other parts of Canada. There have been special rates, special subsidies by the federal Government. The history of railways in Canada is replete with examples of railway subsidies for developmental purposes. Perhaps this is an area that could be looked at. It is a longer-term thing. It is not addressing the immediate concern this season, but it is something that may be looked at in the future.

Generally, the Government of Manitoba has to be very proactive. Perhaps, we need to have a special study. Perhaps there should be a federal-provincial task force studying the possibility of enhancing Churchill. There are all kinds of ideas that could be followed, but

it needs a commitment which I am afraid that we do not have now from the federal Government. I am beginning to wonder whether some Members opposite have that commitment, whether the Premier (Mr. Filmon) of Manitoba really has that commitment.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, Churchill as our northern port, as our only port in Manitoba, is a symbol. It is a symbol of our hope for the future. It is a symbol of potential northern development, and we should unitedly do everything can to ensure that we support Churchill's growth and, as I say, support this resolution. Thank you.

**Mr. Laurie Evans (Fort Garry):** I am disappointed today in speaking to this resolution because I guess, a week ago, I left this House quite elated when we had a three-Party committee that left, I felt, with the idea that we were leaving in a spirit of cooperation. I want to commend the Minister of Transport who chaired that meeting and the other Members of that committee because I felt we entered that meeting with the idea that a genuine attempt would be made to cooperate. I think the Minister took all haste that he possibly could to get the first meeting established, and I think it was a very effective meeting although of course I was disappointed to see that there was no one at that first meeting who could speak on behalf of the Canadian Wheat Board.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker, Mark Minenko, in the Chair.)

I was satisfied on the meeting that was called for tomorrow—that we would have someone from the Canadian Wheat Board present. I was not naive enough to assume that we were going to have someone come from the Canadian Wheat Board that was going to make an iron-clad commitment because, having been involved in various aspects of the grain industry for a long time, I know where the Wheat Board stands. They are not going to jump to somebody's whim and make a major commitment in a hurry.

I was extremely disappointed to read in the paper this morning where the Honourable Charles Mayer had essentially pre-empted the entire effectiveness of this committee. I was of the opinion that he certainly, being a Member from Manitoba, a farmer from Manitoba, the Member who is responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, would do everything within his power to at least meet with the committee. I find it unbelievable that Minister would stand up and talk to the press and tell the press that he will not meet with the legislative committee. I cannot understand the logic behind that. I can understand him saying that, oh, there are so many provincial committees established that he would be tied up all the time if he did that. We, as a Liberal Party, have not met with the Honourable Charles Mayer today because I think there is still a role for this committee to play. I think there is a major role for that committee to play and I hope that committee will stay in place.

I understand some of the comments that have been made by the Honourable Members opposite, and I think they are valid comments. I certainly am not one who would stand up and say that I would like to see the Canadian Wheat Board politicized. I think it would be

a serious mistake to have the Canadian Wheat Board politicized where they are doing what is at the direction of the Minister. I think that they have to retain their autonomy. They have a role to play and it is critical that that autonomy be retained. The comment has also been made that if you ship grain through the Port of Churchill the costs will be borne on the back of the farmer. I understand the rationale behind that. One has to be very careful that you retain the concept of the mandate of the Canadian Wheat Board which is to obtain the best possible price they can for the Canadian farmer.

What I was hoping we would get from someone representing the Canadian Wheat Board is that they would sit down with us and if they could not make that iron-clad commitment that they would say there is going to be 500,000 tonnes or 750,000 tonnes shipped through the Port of Churchill in 1988 that they would make the commitment that they would do everything in their power to make sure that they try to get sales, try to get buyers who will go into the Port of Churchill to buy their grain. We have spent in this country a lot of money in the various aspects of Churchill. We have put in the power line, we have put in tugs and ice breakers and the rail line and various other things. We have done studies on articulated cars, the whole thing. It is not something that you can let go down the drain because of a lack of political will to try and make some sales and effectively use that port.

I know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that in 1988 we are looking at grain shipments that are considerably below the average. There is not that large amount of grain in the catchment area. We are going to have difficulty getting the quantities of grain to meet the commitments.

I understand the argument that was made by one of the representatives at the meeting the other day that you can quickly move from a seller's market to a buyer's market, but I have a little difficulty understanding why there would not be some attempt made to have the Port of Churchill with a reasonable amount of grain. At this present time we are sitting there at the Port of Churchill with approximately 10,000 tonnes. We have been told that it would take a week-and-a-half to two or possibly even more to get enough grain up to Churchill. Even if sales were made tomorrow, there would be difficulty in mobilizing fast enough to have an effective season. That, to me, is something like any person saying, "Well, we will not have any inventory until we have a buyer." I can understand why you can go from a buyer to a seller's market. You have got the terminal plugged with grain and somebody says, "Well, I will come up and pick a boatload up if you give me the right price for it".

\* (1620)

But surely, there has to be a way of taking a look at that and rationalizing that situation, because we know that the only time it is easy to get grain into Churchill is when you have still got some permafrost so that the line remains stable. Usually, you would like to fill the terminal up there in the months of April, May and June, rather than attempt to do it when you are running into difficulties with the line later on in the season.

There are many issues, and I do not pretend to know all the issues with the Port of Churchill, although it has been studied to death. If you want to, you can go out and find figures that will give you the costs which tell you it is far more expensive to ship out of Churchill. You can find other studies that tell you it is much cheaper to ship out of Churchill. The whole range of things are there. It has been studied to death, and I think there are so many figures that probably some guy could sit down and write 15 Masters' theses if he were so inclined, pulling all that information together. It is all there. Some of it is confusing, some of it is realistic, and so on.

But my view is that we are looking at a fundamental issue here this afternoon, and that fundamental issue is the unwillingness of a Minister from this province, who has the responsibility of the Canadian Wheat Board, to sit down with a committee that is a three-Party committee struck by this Legislature. I think there should be a very strong note of protest go to that Minister, saying that we do not understand the rationale for that type of a decision. That is the thing that upsets me the most. I was not anticipating an ironclad commitment that would make money in Churchill in 1988, but I certainly was expecting the courtesy of the Minister to sit down and talk to that committee. That is my major point. Thank you very much.

**Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture):** I would like to put a few comments on the record with regard to how I view the issue we have in front of us today, the Port of Churchill's exporting of grain of this country, and the value of the Canadian Wheat Board. Certainly, we support the Port of Churchill as an export position from the country of Canada, one of four.

The grain exports in this country have been moving upwards substantially in the last number of years, and our major export agency has been the Canadian Wheat Board. They have sold wheat, barley and oats around the world in a very tough market at various times, and they have committed themselves over the years to serving the farmers of western Canada to their best possible ability. It is their job to go out in the world and sell the grain to the best possible advantage of the farmer of western Canada.

They have shipped grain through the Port of Churchill over the years. A target has usually been around 600,000 tonnes to make it economical. I think, on only one occasion, did we exceed that. On one other occasion, we came very close to it.

I am a little bit concerned about what I hear from the other side of the House today which, in essence, in various ways is saying, use the Port of Churchill at any cost. I am very, very concerned about what that means. The Leader of the NDP was using the word "overrule" on numerous occasions today. He did not go so far as to say, overrule the Wheat Board, but he said, "The Prime Minister must overrule the Minister responsible for the Wheat Board." Then he came up short of saying, overrule the Wheat Board, but it was ever so close that the implication was still there.

The Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) commented, like the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) said, "Make sure there are adequate shipments." But



there are a lot of factors to consider as to whether it is to the best interests of western Canada, the best interests of farmers, and the best interests of the viability of non-politicizing the Wheat Board, as to how far we push this issue at this particular time. The Port of Churchill, very valuable to Manitoba and to western Canada, but let us not lose sight of the fact that if we are going to force something to happen there from the Federal Government to the Wheat Board, we stand a very significant chance of disrupting that non-political element in the Wheat Board that we have had for many years. I believe very strongly in the principle of the Wheat Board, I applaud them exceedingly for the efforts they have made, particularly in the last 10 years, towards moving grain in a tough export market. They have served the farmers of western Canada as well as any agency could, in terms of moving grain.

We have in place a committee which the Minister of Transport (Mr. Albert Driedger) is chairing, which, as many people have said, he has done the best he could do under the circumstances we have. We have met with the Grain Transportation Agency and CN, got their point of view, but we cannot, even as that committee, force anybody to do anything that is not in the best interests of the Wheat Board and the farmers of western Canada. Let us not lose sight of that fact.

We have to consider what the Wheat Board is up against, and I respect very much their ability to sell on a confidential basis. Their negotiations, their sales, their prices, how they negotiate a sale price relative to where it shall be delivered to export is strictly confidential. I do not think we should force them to reveal that. I do not think it would be in the best interest of this Legislature or western Canada if we tried to do that. But we have to consider some real facts that are out there. Nobody has asked the question about whether any country in the world is prepared to buy out of Churchill this year, is prepared to send in ships to Churchill. I am not aware that there is anything, any action going on by any country that is interested in moving in there. I ask the question, why? I really do not know the answer. We cannot force the Wheat Board to reveal that information to us.

The critic from the Liberals has just said that he was disappointed that there was not grain sitting in the Port of Churchill. The Wheat Board's operation in the past has been that they tell GTA to move grain to an export position after they have a committed sale. If we follow up on what he said, that we fill the Port of Churchill full of grain during the winter, and then the Wheat Board has to go and sell it, and you heard the Member say in that meeting the other day that the Wheat Board has been forced at various times to unload that elevator at fire sale prices, because nobody would come in at the quoted price, at the competitive quoted price at the other export points. So it is a delicate, delicate issue.- (Interjection)- You were not in the meeting the other day. Ask your Member who was in the meeting, the Member from Dauphin (Mr. Plohman). He was in the meeting, he heard it said. The Liberal Critic is nodding his head, so he knows.

The Member for Dauphin is not all that interested in what is good for the Wheat Board and good for the

grain industry of western Canada. He is only interested in the short-term politics of trying to force the Federal Government, prior to an election, to do something that is not in the best interest of farmers of western Canada.

**Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin):** I do not think that it is proper parliamentary procedure to impute motives to an individual, and that is exactly what the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) has just done, and I would like him to withdraw those remarks.

**Mr. Findlay:** If I imputed any motives, I apologize to the Member. But the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie), all Members of this House must realize the delicate issue we are dealing with, with the relative non-politicization of the Canadian Wheat Board, and to me that is the most important issue that I, as a Minister of Agriculture, have to deal with. The Port of Churchill I support, and I hope that the Wheat Board in its ability to negotiate sales around the world can find a country that is prepared to pick up grain at a competitive price through the Port of Churchill.

\* (1630)

But the Port of Churchill has to mean more to Manitoba than just grain exports. I wonder where was the Liberal Government some 16, 17 years in power in Ottawa, the NDP Government the last six-and-a-half years here in power, and we have had no development in Churchill in terms of tourism, moving potash, moving pulp and paper. The viability of the port was not addressed. Where was the action? You talk about keeping the Port of Churchill. They are wanting it to be viable, but there was no action. Maybe it is not possible to ever do it but nothing has happened. So you cannot force something to happen right now that the Wheat Board is unable to deliver on. That is the most critical issue we have in front of us in my mind from the point of view of the farmers of Manitoba.

I believe the Wheat Board is selling grain at the highest possible return to the producers and, as long as they are doing that, they are serving the farmers of western Canada well. The Port of Churchill, I hope and pray, becomes an export point this year, and we can add more grain through there in the coming years. But never lose sight of the fact that the ability to do that depends on our ability or the ability of western Canada to have significant rain in the fall of '88, snow over the winter of '89, so we have a good growing season in '89 and the years after so that we can produce the grain that the world needs and we can have a significant economic advantage from growing and selling that grain.

With that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would hope that no Members over there are prepared to go so far as to say that the Wheat Board has to be forced to sell through the Port of Churchill. That would be to the detriment of the Wheat Board, but we do support it and I personally support it. I know the farmers of western Canada, under normal circumstances, support the Port of Churchill fully and completely.

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, as Members who have been in this House the last

number of years will know, I have a distinct interest in the future of the Port of Churchill. I think I have introduced a resolution on the port in pretty well every Session of the Legislature. I have raised it during Question Period. I have raised it during debate and, as we are speaking on this resolution today, I am reminded of why I feel so strongly about the Port of Churchill.

I suppose my first contact with the port came when I moved to Thompson in the 1960s with my parents. It is ironic. At that time in the mid-1960s, the Town of Thompson, because it was then a town, was approximately 4,000 to 5,000 people. So was the Town of Churchill. There was quite a rivalry back and forth between the schools. There were many school trips. I unfortunately never had the opportunity to go on one. They were two towns of almost identical population that shared the isolation, shared the northern region, and there was a kinship that developed. It is interesting, I think, and it is a comment on what has been happening to Churchill, the fact that Thompson went in the 1960s from a population of approximately 4,000 to the point where, at one stage, it was more than 20,000 population, while Churchill declined to the point that today there is just barely over 1,000 people. There are various factors that have been in place that have gone into those various trends. It is something that I have reflected on, certainly in the work I have been able to try and do as an individual Member of the Legislature in terms of the port.

That was the first contact, I suppose, I had with the idea of Churchill. It was not really until I visited Churchill that I understood how important Churchill is to our region, the northern region of Manitoba, to Manitoba and, yes, Canada as a whole. I remember four years ago, virtually to the day, being in Churchill. It was during the federal election actually. I was with Ed Broadbent. I remember boarding a Greek ship which was carrying grain to Europe. I remember explaining in Greek, to the sailors, who was visiting the ship and why. I remember feeling after that a certain sense of pride in the port, that here in northern Manitoba we had an international port that was a window on the world, but also at the same time a feeling of sadness that window was restricted to seven or eight ships in some years, maybe 18 or 20 in others, and thinking of the lost potential in the port.

I brought that to this Legislature and I brought that sort of perspective to the Port of Churchill Development Board when I sat on the board. In fact, I suppose I am still officially on the Port of Churchill Development Board if it is in existence. I hope that it does continue in existence, no matter who is representing the Province of Manitoba, because it has provided a useful function lobbying for the port.

I bring to this Legislature a real sense that Churchill is really the forgotten port. If anybody looks at the history of the port, looks at the fights that took place in the late 19th Century by farmers—because it was farmers that fought for the Port of Churchill, western farmers—if one looks at the significance of the northern region of Manitoba becoming part of the Province of Manitoba, which it did just over 75 years ago, which

is a key element in the building of the Port at Churchill, if one looks at the sacrifice of literally hundreds of workers who died in the construction of that port, and if one looks at the dreams of people over the years who have seen Churchill for its potential, not just its actuality as a relatively minor port in Canada, relatively minor in terms of treatment, in terms of grain shipments, etc., but they have seen the potential.

When I travel to other countries, I have noticed just how important, how critical ports are. I noticed a couple of the comments by the Leader of the Opposition and other Members who have spoken just how important ports are. My wife's home town in Greece, Alexandroupolis, Greece has been occupied successively in the last 75 years by the Ottoman Turks. It became part of Greece in the 1920s. It was occupied by the Germans, by the Bulgarians, all because they sought that port. It was strategically important.

Yet in Canada, we have a northern port, our one northern port, and it seems that nationally we cannot break away from the vested interests: the grain companies, the C.N. and others who have a vested economic interest in seeing the port does not develop. It is a shame to my mind that we cannot break away from that and see Churchill for its true potential, and see the potential not only in terms of grain but also in terms of further economic development.

To my mind, the prospects for long-term economic development in northern Manitoba are tied fundamentally to the port, but it is intertwined with its role as a grain shipping port. Without its role as a grain shipping port this year and in other years, the Port of Churchill will wither and die, and I do not want to see that happen. I do not want to see people 10 and 20 and 30 years from now look back on this period, and wonder why the politicians of the time and the civil servants at the time in Ottawa did not have the vision to see Churchill for what it is worth. I hope that they will look back on this and see it perhaps as one of the tougher times for the port, but see it perhaps as a time when the supporters of the port rallied to its defence.

When we passed the resolution just a few days ago, unanimously in this House, I must say that I felt really good being a supporter of the port. I felt really good that it took the port, in a way, to bring this House to unanimity because, in the seven years that I have been here—and there are other Members who have been here much longer than I have—I cannot remember very many occasions, maybe one or two, where there has been unanimous support for any resolution in this House. I felt really good.

You will have to forgive me if I get frustrated when I see that perhaps the support is not as solid as I thought it was. When I saw the Premier (Mr. Filmon) today get up and waffle on the issue and suggest somehow that it was to be blamed on previous Governments, I was amazed. Is the Premier not aware of the fact that, in 1984, a \$92 million subagreement was signed by the previous Government, the NDP Government, with the previous Liberal Government federally, which brought major improvements to the Port of Churchill? Was he not aware of the developments that took place under the previous Minister of Transportation who worked

tirelessly for the port? You can take not just my word, as a colleague, but the people from Churchill were amazed that a Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) would take such an interest in the port.

A lot has been done by previous Governments. Let this Premier (Mr. Filmon) not try and blame it on previous Governments in terms of the situation. I hear today as well Members in speeches and Members from their seat talking about the Wheat Board and not interfering with the Wheat Board. I think the case for Churchill is clear. It has been documented in consultant study after consultant study. Churchill is an economical port for the shipment of grain. That is proven. I guess one of the saddest parts, ironically, is that much of the catchment area for Churchill is not in the Province of Manitoba. Most of the catchment area is in Saskatchewan. A larger part of the catchment area for the Port of Churchill is actually in Alberta than in this province. I suspect that is one of the problems that we have had is lukewarm support from some of the agricultural areas in this province.

I recognize that they are not in the catchment area, but I would hope that everyone in every area of this province would remember the fight of farmers of western Canada in the 19th Century, and remember just how important the port was then and how important it can be in the future. Remember that we are talking about grain, yes, but we are talking about future economic development as well. I really believe that, when we are in the position now that the port's destiny is within the hands of this generation, the port's very future is in the hands of the elected officials of today in this Legislature and in the House of Commons, what we need is not lukewarm support at the provincial level. We need every one of the 57 Members of this House fully supporting the port and standing up for it in this Legislature, in this debate, in Question Period, in every other opportunity.

That is the message I think we should send today. Yes, we pass a resolution; yes, we all place comments on the record. But the bottom line of our comments today has to be that we, the 57 Members of the Legislature, are willing to take a stand for Churchill. We are willing to say that it has a future. We are willing to fight for it now, recognizing that its future is at stake this very moment and that, yes, we are going to get what Churchill deserves, which is that it will be recognized as an economical grain shipment port. It will be recognized for its future potential for economic development, for northern Manitoba yes, for Canada as well—you bet! Our future, I believe, lies as much in the North as any other area in Canada. As a Northerner, I am proud to support the Port of Churchill at every opportunity, but I think we here all as Manitobans should. That is why I look to this debate to send that clear message to the Prime Minister and the Government of Canada.

**Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk):** I am very pleased today to speak on the Port of Churchill.

When I moved to Manitoba in 1969 to come to university, besides the City of Winnipeg, there were two other places I recognized from the history I was taught

in Ontario, those being the Selkirk settlers in the Town of Selkirk, which turned out to be the history of my own life, and also the Port of Churchill. I think that shows what Canadians see of Manitoba, not one isolated community but a province, a province that extends from the south to the north. They recognize not only the farm land but also the northern scope and vast tundra and ports, and all the areas that go with the North that we think of.

Today, we are discussing not just the Farm Association and how grain is shipped. We are discussing the future of Manitoba. We are discussing how it relates to the rest of Canada and how Canada relates to Manitoba. We have a Minister of Canada today who refuses to recognize the provincial representation that wishes to discuss the future of Manitoba. I find this absolutely startling.

There are arguments to be made in many ways as to whether Churchill is viable or not. I think one Minister of the Government today mentioned, can we afford Churchill. That is a question, because certainly we are looking at the economics of everything here in this House. Can we not afford the Port of Churchill? That is the question we have to also address. We have to address what it means to Manitoba.

We have a booming tourist industry in Manitoba and even more so in Churchill. People are coming from the United States in droves to see the polar bears, the migrating of birds, the beluga whales and so forth. We have a port that is a jumping-off place for the rest of the North. We have the ability to provide medical services for the North, and continue to do so with the good wishes of our Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). We have the ability to open up, to be the starting-off place for the North of Canada, and that is indeed a responsibility we cannot take lightly here in this Assembly.

\* (1640)

Can we afford the Port of Churchill? Now the arguments are being made by the Government that we cannot direct the Canadian Wheat Board what it can do. It has to stay non-political. That is an argument indeed, but can we not address to them some concerns? The Minister, I think, has that authority. He is the Minister of the Canadian Wheat Board. What does he do there, just sit and hold the title? Does he not discuss anything with them? Does he just look at their books at the end of the year, and that is it?

I suggest he has some role to play with the Canadian Wheat Board. What we were told on our Tuesday meeting by Peter Thomson of The Grain Transportation Authority that he suspected—and I am not sure that was his term but that was the way I recall his intention—that the Canadian Wheat Board has not even looked at shipping grain out of the Port of Churchill, and we could ask them to look at it. I suggest here that we ask very vehemently that they look at the Port of Churchill because, when they look at the Port of Churchill, they are looking at Manitoba. When they are looking at Manitoba, they are not looking at just the farmers. They are looking at our Northerners, and they

are looking at what Canada means on a province-by-province basis.

The Canadian Wheat Board indeed should in overall terms be non-political, but the Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) himself indicated that it has been challenged by the Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey). Now, if you can challenge it once, does that mean you never challenge it again? Can we not challenge it to look at putting grain through the port? -(Interjection)- You escaped once, well, why can we not do it more often? I mean, we do not want to do it on a day-to-day basis but, if we have to do it every two decades, it is not too bad.

We have to be able to go to our federal Government. They indeed are over us in the aspect of Canada-wide Ministries, but we indeed should be able to talk to them. This Assembly was not asking them for immediate action. They were asking them to listen to us and, if they will not listen to us, then who are we supposed to speak to? The Prime Minister will not listen to the Premier (Mr. Filmon). The Minister will not listen to the Minister of our Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger) who is doing indeed a great job at trying to get his attention.

So what are we supposed to do, just sit here? No, I think we took the responsible attitude of getting an all-Party agreement that we have to discuss this motion. I take great objection to the Members of the Government who are trying to make this a political statement. If we are going to pretend that there are no politics involved, well maybe that is naive, but we have to do our utmost to take politics out of it on a one-to-one basis and on a party-to-party basis. I really do object to the tone that has been set by some Ministers here that we are trying to make a big game plan out of this.

If we cannot believe in each other's belief that we are representing Manitobans to the best of our ability, then what are we here for? We have to have respect for each other. We have to have respect for Manitoba, and we are definitely discussing whether we are having respect for the Port of Churchill or whether we are just going to give up and say, well maybe next year, maybe the year after, whenever the next crisis enters and we will deal with it then.

We each have choices to make in this life and we have decided to make the choice today to discuss the Port of Churchill. Now, do we have an answer for what should be done? Hopefully, there will be some wise decision here of all the discussions that take place what direction we indeed can take. I hope that will come to our meeting tomorrow as a committee. I think there is some future for the Port of Churchill, and I hope every one of us here believes there is a future for the Port of Churchill.

But we cannot assume the future exists. We do not know today when we leave this building what our future may be, or the future of this Government will be. We have to assume that we can do the best for the future and, in doing the best, it is indeed looking at the issues of the day and the issue today is the Port of Churchill. We cannot delay looking at it. We were questioned as to why we have not brought it up in our speeches. Well,

it is obvious. We had a committee looking at it. Are we supposed to supersede the committee, as the Minister of the Wheat Board has decided to do in just speaking without their consultation? No.

We, as Members of the Opposition, have stood up and spoken on the Budget. We have not spoken on the Canadian Wheat Board nor the Port of Churchill because it is being dealt with in another forum. To imply that, as some of the Ministers have done, is to try to put some political atmosphere on an issue that should have taken away from that, and into the area of what our future is.

We have to look towards our North. We have to protect our North. There is a great, great population up there that we always seem to overlook. There is a great, great vast area up there that we do not tend to, as in the environment or a wildlife, or any of those protections. But we have to look at what the future is, to have a viable community there, to have a community that we can proudly say is part of Manitoba, to have a community that edges on one of our most northerly borders.

It means that we are a complete province, and only in completeness should we be happy in this Legislature because we are here to represent, not just Winnipeg, not just the farmers of Manitoba, but indeed all of Manitoba. So let us regard, and take this into regard when we are looking at the discussion today, that we are looking towards our future. If this were a northern issue, it would have different arguments. It is an issue of all, not only just grain, but of our North, and of every attitude we have for Manitoba, because our future is across the whole scope, and we should look towards the vitality of Manitoba and keep all those aspects in mind. Thank you.

**Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern Affairs):**

I want to be very brief in my comments and give everyone an opportunity to put their comments on the record. It is not an issue coming to this Legislative Assembly for the first time, but for many times, and I have been here for some years, have had the opportunity to look at it from the Opposition benches, and had a chance to look at it from the position of Minister, before as Minister of Agriculture.

I want to start my comments today by saying that I do not think there is any one person here today trying to underestimate the importance of the issue, the fact that it is a community in Manitoba, there are people's livelihoods at stake, that it is a part of a system, Canada is known worldwide for its ability to grow top quality food, that we are able to, after sorting out some of the transportation problems and some of the difficulties that I was involved in through the late 1970s and 80s. A lot of the politics we referred to my colleagues and a historical meeting was held right in this building.

In January of 1979, I believe it was, under Sterling Lyon, some people may recognize the name of Otto Lang as the former Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, the transportation system. One of the major problems at that time, ladies and gentlemen of this Assembly, is that we had a multitude of grain

in western Canada. We had the First Ministers of this country meeting on what they could do to improve the economy of western Canada. It was very straightforward what could be done if we got our act together. We could streamline the system, add some product to hopper cars to the system, put some engine power in place, clear some of the bureaucracy, get labour onside and move grain. That is exactly what happened and it was a very historical event.

I had the privilege to be part of the organization of it, and I think some positive things were accomplished. It was not approached from one single side.

I would like to speak, and I am not speaking in defence of my federal friend, the federal Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, in not coming to this committee meeting, because I would have thought it would have helped clear the air for some of the Members, and I am somewhat disappointed in that regard. However, I am not going to stand here and lay full condemnation on his head, because he has been a good Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board and for the farmers of western Canada, when one looks at the positive policies that have been put in place—grain stabilization changes, the low price at a grain support program. There have been several billions of dollars put into the hands of western Canadian farmers. I think we would be less than responsible if we stood here and fully condemned one Minister of the Crown. Yes, disagree and be totally upset that he did not come to our committee, but I think we want to be very careful not to destroy future relationships that we hope to have with federal Ministers, with the province and the future use of Churchill because one would not want to sour in any way, shape or form an ongoing opportunity for that particular port. I say that because, when you are condemning one federal Minister, you are condemning the federal Government. I like to look at it in a little broader range.

\* (1650)

I would like to think that not only should this Committee be looking at, yes, the immediate concern of movement of grain but I can assure you as Minister responsible for Northern and Native Affairs that with my colleague, the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger), my colleague, the Minister for Industry, Trade & Technology (Mr. Ernst), that we have to, in the longer term, look to a broader range of commodities that can be moved in and out of the Port of Churchill. This may be old fashioned, it may be rhetorical but let us not get ourselves into the situation where we say that we are going to continue to let the future of Churchill be hanging on the future of the grain industry.

Let us look at the actual situation. As I mentioned in Committee the other day, the grain industry is in dire straits. Western Canadian farmers—as we see continued dry weather, no fall rains and no prospect for future moisture for growing of another crop—you are not going to see grain supplies loosen up. You are going to see grain supplies tighten up and continually tighten up. I do not want to be a Member who stands here and is talking doom and gloom, but I think we have to look at it in a realistic way.

I have to be very honest with my colleagues from the New Democratic Party who for many, many years stood up first of all to defend labour. They see the importance of the grain industry in the farm community as it is tied and I think we do not want to segregate any one section. I think it is extremely important that we expect the same kind of support—and I again go back a little bit in history to when I was a Minister in 1977 when the Port of Churchill was not operating because of a labour strike, because of a shut down and work stoppage. I was desperately at that time, as Minister of Agriculture, requesting support from the New Democratic Opposition to help get the workers back to work in Churchill, but it was not forthcoming. It did not come. I put on the record the other day what the response was. It was that I offered to send farmers or pay farmers' way to go to Churchill to load grain. The response from the New Democratic Party at that time was, farmers would not know how to handle the grain. I have the press clippings, by the way, on that particular historic time.

I think—and it is not political criticism, it is reality that I am putting on the record. Let us take a broader look at the whole picture and when the Conservative Party stands and say we need support to move grain when labour shutdowns come into play, let us work together to do it because to direct a labour movement or to direct strikers back to work is the same thing as directing the Canadian Wheat Board to put grain into the Port of Churchill. That is the kind of power that this Committee, this House is asking to take place. I do not think you want that. I really think you should assess very carefully what you are asking in that regard.

What we want do are two things, basically, in my estimation. Make sure that every bushel of wheat, every bushel of barley, every bushel of product that is available, that can be sent to the Port of Churchill and used in that port, is done. That is what we want done. You want to do it through persuasion, actually through a directive. Then you better be careful because it has serious implications in all of our society, and I should say for the Honourable Member for Selkirk's (Mrs. Charles) sake that sometimes in debate one can get rolling along pretty good and make statements that can cause some action or reaction in the community.

I happened to be a Minister of Agriculture, went through frustration and through a tie up in the grain system, and a lot of the problem at that time was being pointed at the Canadian Wheat Board. I say this—and it is on the public record—that through frustration and concern for the farm community, I made the statement that the Canadian Wheat Board should be wrestled to the ground because it was a bureaucracy unto itself. I can tell you that was the first time I ever received a call from the Chief Commissioner of the Canadian Wheat Board, as a Minister of Agriculture.

I think any Minister of Agriculture in western Canada should be contacted, on a regular basis, to discuss the concerns of the grain industry when times are tough or vice-versa. However, it was somewhat taken out of context. I did survive that statement. It was editorialized and I was kicked around for a while, but after the writers had their satisfaction, there were some improvements.

There were truly some improvements. Whether it was that statement that caused it or whatever it was, we had some action.

This activity that we are going through, I am sure, will make them take a look at every possible avenue, but I think it is very dangerous ground for us to get into the position of actually directing, because it would be no different, in my estimation, to direct the Canadian Wheat Board to do it as it would be to direct—and I say direct—a labour movement to load boats against their wishes.

We have got to be pretty careful in how we approach it. I think the broader work that this Legislative Assembly should be doing—and I am disappointed that it has not been done prior in a more meaningful way—is the alternative use for the Port of Churchill. I am sure the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) has been somewhat frustrated at times that he must have seen products other than wheat, barley or oats going out of other ports that may have been able to go through the Port of Churchill.

I am not sure what work was done by the prior administration in that regard. I know that there have been some recent press comments that Manfor was considering the shipping of some lumber to the U.K. Excellent idea, excellent potential. Again—a short season but a possible alternative. Those are the kinds of things that I think will add to the long-term longevity of Churchill. I think the grain, yes, has to be a major part of it, but when it continues to be—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The Honourable Member's time is over.

**Mr. Downey:** I thank you for the opportunity to participate in this debate.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair.)

**Mr. Storie:** I would like to add a few brief remarks to the record as one of the northern MLAs who represents a constituency, who has an interest in maintaining, developing, securing the longevity of the Port of Churchill not only as an important northern asset but an asset to the Province of Manitoba and to Canada; and I guess, also, to add my thoughts in response to some of the comments that we have heard, particularly, from the Members on the Government side who sound, I think, unfortunately defensive about this particular situation, who feel some obligation to defend the interests of their federal counterparts rather than defend the real interests of Manitobans and, I believe, the real interests of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta farmers.

Mr. Speaker, we are talking about a port whose importance goes beyond, for many people, I believe, simply the question of handling grain. We know—and it has been put on the record—that what we have seen over the past few years is a diminution of the importance of Churchill in terms of handling grain.

We have a circumstance currently which, I believe, threatens the Port of Churchill because of the unwillingness, the seeming inability of the current

Minister responsible for the Wheat Board to stir up his courage and make some tough decisions. We have heard from Members on the Government side, including the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey), the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), who have warned us that we should be concerned about the possibility of politicizing the Canadian Wheat Board.

Well, let no one in this Chamber be under the illusion that the Canadian Wheat Board is not politicized in some sense, in a small "p" sense already. There are interests on the Canadian Wheat Board which contend with interests amongst that group. They do not necessarily represent the interests either of Manitoba farmers—I should not say Canadian farmers, but Manitoba farmers—and certainly do not represent the interests of communities such as the community of Churchill. They have their own politics, and politics is being played on the basis of dollar signs in the main.

\* (1700)

It is political. The decisions that have been made over the past number of decades with respect to the Port of Churchill, the shipping of grain to the Port of Churchill, always had a political element. I would defy anybody to suggest that there has not been some element of politics, and again I say small "p" politics, not Liberal, not Conservative necessarily, but they are making decisions in someone's best interest and it is not always the Canadian farmer.

The point I am trying to make is that this hysteria that seems to have struck and gripped the Members of the Government with respect to politicizing the Canadian Wheat Board, there lies the fact that on occasion politicizing something is not necessarily bad. Every time I have heard politicization mentioned in the context of this debate, it has been pejoratively. Just because you politicize something does not mean that has to be negative. We have politicized lots of issues in this country from Medicare to unemployment successfully. We have politicized them because we believe there was some method, some underlying good that would come out of politicizing this issue.

There is the potential for some underlying good to come out of politicizing the issue of whether we are going to ship wheat through the Port of Churchill. It is a question of whether there is vision, whether there is some hope, some understanding of the potential that lies in the Port of Churchill. The federal Government and the Minister responsible for the Wheat Board, and the Wheat Board itself, are going to have to take a serious look at the long-term potential for that port. The studies that have been done in the past number of decades have recognized the potential not only for the handling, as has been said, of grains, but also the handling of other commodities, and the IBI Report suggests an additional 20 commodities that could be shipped through that port.

If politicizing this issue means that the federal Government, either in concert with the Wheat Board or independently, decides to take some action to secure the long-term stability and the enhancement potential

of the Port of Churchill, then I say let us politicize the issue to that extent. It does not have to mean, necessarily, that farmers or the grain companies are going to be the sacrificial lambs in that endeavour. It simply means that there has to be a political commitment to the Port of Churchill. We saw that commitment by the previous NDP Government, the previous Minister of Transportation who was willing to commit provincial dollars and a federal Government that at one time was prepared to commit federal dollars to the development of the Port of Churchill. We have lost that.

For the Minister responsible for the Wheat Board to say he is not prepared to involve himself in this issue, to take a stand in terms of the longer-term interest of Churchill in Manitoba and Canada, then I think that is unfortunate.

I think this debate will be healthy if we politicize the Port of Churchill's plight. If we politicize the plight of workers, hopefully workers in the Port of Churchill, then I think we will have accomplished something, because I think it is time that the federal Government in particular, but certain Members of the Government also, sat down and considered whether they have a vision for the Churchill line and what Churchill can be for the Province of Manitoba.

If they believe, as we believe, certainly, in the New Democratic Party, that it is an important asset to Manitoba, then let us not be afraid to stand up; because I will tell Members opposite, history is full of examples of people who said, well, I cannot stand up because I am going to be overwhelmed by other interests. If we do not stand up and say what we believe, that we believe in the Port of Churchill, then we are missing an opportunity. I do not think Members in this Chamber want to miss that opportunity. I know I do not. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** When the motion came forward for this great urgent debate on the Port of Churchill, I felt that Members opposite, in their collective wisdom, must know something that we on this side do not know, that they must know something that they could propose that could happen as a result of this debate that would assure the long-term viability of the Port of Churchill; that somehow they had a magic solution, they had an answer, and that this debate today, which is going to knock aside the debate on the Budget, was going to be the be-all and the end-all and the cure for all the problems with the Port of Churchill.

Of course, the New Democrats, Mr. Speaker, have been working with the Liberals on this urgent debate because they had taken away the initiative from the Liberals a couple of weeks ago when they put forward their own proposal for emergency debate and, of course, the Liberals did not go along with it.

So now the Liberals, having lost the initiative, want to come back on the initiative and be seen somehow to be doing something on the Port of Churchill that was not being done.

Mr. Speaker, what do we have? We have an urgent public debate on Churchill that, from my judgment, has

produced a lot of self-serving statements saying that we all believe in and we all support the Port of Churchill.

I want to tell you we have said that over and over and over again. Whenever the question has been asked, everyone on this side has indicated their total commitment and their total support for the Port of Churchill. My Minister of Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger) has indicated that we will do everything we can to see that grain is shipped through Churchill in the quantities that are needed to ensure that the port remains viable.

We continue to be committed to that. I do not have any doubt in my mind that the Members opposite have the same kind of commitment. We had that same commitment when we got together as "all-Parties" and passed a resolution about a week ago that said we would do a certain number of things in order. The all-Party committee would get together, would call together people from all the various groups who are involved in Churchill because, indeed, the long-term viability of the Port of Churchill, or the short-term viability of the Port of Churchill, is not something that is in the hands of this Legislature.

It is within the hands of a whole host of players in the game. They have to do with the Pools who are representing and marshalling and marketing grain through the Canadian Wheat Board in this country. They have to do with the Canadian Wheat Board, with the Canadian National Railways, the Grain Transportation Authority, the Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board. Obviously, there are many players in this whole puzzle that have to be involved and take committed action to support Churchill.

But, Mr. Speaker, are we talking about an issue that has come about as a result of the drought in Canada this year? To some degree, we are. Are there other issues involved in this whole process? Yes, indeed there are, because the fact of the matter is that Churchill's viability is at risk this year because of low grain transportation potential because no action was taken by previous administrations to take Churchill's dependency off shipping grain only as its only major function.

The reality is that the former New Democratic administration that represents all five seats in the North, and has done so since at least 1981, did not do anything in its term of Government to take the dependency of Churchill off the shipment of grain. Indeed, they did not. Did they arrange for any other commodities to be shipped through the Port of Churchill? Is there any other use being made to the Port of Churchill? Thanks to the former administration—no, there is not.

\* (1710)

Similarly, did the former federal Trudeau Liberal Government do anything to ensure the long-term viability of the Port of Churchill? What did they do? What did they do to make sure that Churchill would be viable in the longer term? Absolutely nothing. We have a community in Churchill that all of us want to preserve. How do we preserve it? We take it away from its dependency on one single commodity or one single

industry. That is what we do to make it long-term, a community that will last forever in Manitoba. What does that mean? That means making sure that it has other industries and other sectors of the economy that it can depend upon to be economically viable.

Okay, here is the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) who cannot remember anything other than one line: Did you phone the Prime Minister? He cannot remember anything else about this issue, and he knows less about making Churchill viable and a community of substance and a community with stability for the long-term, because he did absolutely nothing. He did absolutely nothing for it. That is what the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) knows about Churchill—nothing. He only believes that all you have to do is pass a resolution in this House or have a debate in this House and that will solve Churchill's problem. When he was in Government and had an opportunity to create economic opportunity, economic development in Churchill, he did absolutely nothing. That is the problem we find ourselves in today.

When the Leader of the Opposition says that she went to Churchill for the first time and she spoke with school children, and they said that they want to preserve Churchill because they live there, did she say to them what needs to be done is to ensure that Churchill has an economic base that will support it for all time in future; that we can ensure that we develop tourism in Churchill; that we can ensure that we develop other economic opportunities; or that we can ensure that it is not just dependent on grain, so that when there is a drought year and there is not much grain to go around and every port is screaming for it and that her colleague, the Liberal Premier in Ontario, is screaming that not enough grain is being shipped through Thunder Bay, that instead we are put in this kind of confrontative squeeze?

That is not the way it should be. If we are going to do something in the long-term in Churchill, it is going to be done because a Government takes the long-term view of Churchill. I will give you some -(Interjection)- Yes, we are. As a matter of fact, in response to the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), yes, we are. When my Ministers were meeting with federal Ministers during the past week and they talked in terms of Churchill, they talked in terms of long-term economic opportunity.

I will let the Members of the Opposition in on a little bit of information which they may not be aware of. The Minister of Tourism (Mr. Ernst) is going to be going next weekend to the Port of Churchill to meet an incoming cruise ship, the first time a tourism cruise ship has come into the Port of Churchill. That is the kind of thing that can give some opportunity for the longer-term. It is a first step to the development of an ongoing tourism program for the Port of Churchill.

We are—and our Ministers were discussing with the federal Government a number of initiatives that can also be utilized to create a longer-term opportunity in the Port of Churchill. Yes, we are talking about taking its dependency off just the shipment of grain, but at the same time we also believe that the shipment of grain can be a continuing benefit. We also believe that the shipment of other commodities should be and can

be a continuing benefit. The previous administration, when they were in Government, did not think that was important or could not do anything toward that, so they did not find any other commodities that could be shipped through Churchill or any other arrangements that could be made.

We are faced with this kind of issue in which the only answer is that we have to come up with some emergency debate to discuss the things that we all agree on. We all agree on Churchill being a community that we want to preserve in Manitoba. We all agree that we want our share of the long-term viability of Churchill. Is that going to happen because of this debate? No, it is not. These people opposite do not want to debate the Budget, they do not want to debate the issues that Manitobans are concerned about. Instead, for whatever political purposes, they want to have an emergency debate that allows them to talk about their discussions with school children in Churchill. We have a committee in place.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I am sure that all Honourable Members would want to grant the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) the courtesy which is granted to them.

**Mr. Filmon:** The truth hurts, the truth hurts. I can understand their sensitivity. The fact of the matter is they have not done something when it was in their power. All they want to do, the Liberals, because they are inexperienced and do not have any knowledge of what is going on in Churchill, they want to join in with the NDP to create a political issue over the Port of Churchill.

The fact of the matter is we are committed to the long-term viability of the Port of Churchill. We are going to diversify the community of Churchill. We are going to make sure that there are other opportunities in tourism, in economic development and other avenues for employment, to ensure that this Legislature will not have to enter into this debate when there is a drought, when there is a shortage of grain to be shipped. We do not want to have to go through this again in future. We want the Port of Churchill to be viable in the longer term, and we are going to take it off its dependency on one single commodity.

**Mr. John Angus (St. Norbert):** I am pleased to be able to participate in this discussion and debate, and I would like to address some of my remarks to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) of this province, who suggests that the problem, at least in my mind, is not of discussion, not one of debate, not one of addressing the problems, but the problem is one of attitude, an attitude that says that it is them against us, that we have ulterior motives, that we have a hidden agenda, that we are just trying to make political points.

It disappoints me that he will have to read my remarks in Hansard. It disappoints me that he is not prepared to cooperate, that he is not prepared to work together and speak on behalf of Manitobans, because I read



with concern in the paper that Mr. Peterson from Ontario is writing letters to the Prime Minister and arguing his case for Thunder Bay.

I read with interest that Vander Zalm is writing and communicating with the Prime Minister of this country and competing for grain into Vancouver, into ports on the west coast. And where are we? We are not even prepared to talk to the Minister of the Wheat Board. The whole problem is one of attitude, in that as indicated before, we recognize the problem, and I applaud the initiative of the Members opposite in trying to look at alternatives to address the solution in the Port of Churchill because that is what is required. That is exactly what is required, that there must be more methods. There must be more dialogue, and more readiness to sit down and work together cooperatively on this issue. If the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) continues to stick his head in the sand, or in the case of Churchill, in the snow perhaps, and not recognize that there is the ability for people to work cooperatively to address issues that are of concern to Manitobans; to recognize that by deserting those people, by moving the population of Manitoba south from the Port of Churchill, that the cost is going to be astronomical to the citizens of Manitoba, and to the citizens of Canada, and that we must take a positive action of cooperation of working together.

\* (1720)

It is very disconcerting when I recognize that these individuals on the opposite side of the House will not cooperate, will not recognize, that continually try to pit their particular team against our team. It is further discouraging when it is apparent that the level of this debate is one that is going to have to be addressed in written form because they are not prepared to pay attention, to sit down and discuss the issue, not in their committee rooms, not in this House, not on any level. The First Minister (Mr. Filmon) goes off to Ottawa and he discusses, apparently, with his Leader, the Prime Minister of Canada, options that can be explored to assist Manitobans, but he is not prepared to share that information with this House. His individual Ministers work independently of an all-committee structure and, as has been said by other Members and by Members on the opposite side too, it is a real opportunity for us to work together and speak on behalf of the rights of Manitobans and the desires of Manitobans and the problems of Manitobans.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the Honourable First Minister (Mr. Filmon) of this particular province has reduced us into a two-sided tennis match again. He does not want the ball and he bats it back to us, indicating that we have private agendas and motivations, suggesting that we want to do things that are unparliamentary, that we want to disrupt the process of information.

It is a very important issue. It has financial implications on this province that could be devastating and that we have got to try and work together cooperatively to address these solutions. I am suggesting to you that it is a problem not of initiative. The House has taken the initiative to work together. The problem is one of an attitude. Are we prepared to sit down and work

cooperatively, or are we simply paying mouth service to this type of cooperation? It appears, unfortunately, that the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) of this province is simply paying lip service to the problem and is not prepared to take any specific action.

I believe that we, as a House, have recognized that there is a serious problem and that we, as elected Members of the population of this province, wish to address that problem cooperatively and continually to try and find solutions that we can live with. We are not arguing political position. We are not arguing different methods of accomplishing the same objective. We are arguing the fact that we want to be able to pull in the same direction to address this problem. If those Ministers and if the Government of this particular province at this time continues to closet themselves to try and address this problem, they are not going to get any further ahead than they have to date.

We have seen the type of cooperation that they have been able to muster from their senior brothers and sisters. We have seen the lack of cooperation, of participation, of willingness to even sit down and discuss and include not only the elected Member of that area but other interested persons in this particular House who can contribute. We have seen them with their attitude once again, thinking that they have the only solution and the only way of doing things. Mr. Speaker, it is their attitude that is wrong and, until they change their attitude, there is not going to be any progress in this province on this particular issue. Thank you very much.

**Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill):** Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to thank you for your decision to allow this debate to continue today.

Let there be no doubt about it in any person's mind who sits in this Chamber or who is listening to this debate or who reads about this debate as to what is at stake in this debate today. We are speaking to the very future of the Port of Churchill and a community that relies upon that port for its economic future. We are talking about hundreds of families—fathers, mothers, daughters, sons, children—that are touched by what happens or, more importantly, what might not happen at that port this year and in every year.

We are speaking to the future of hundreds of railway workers and their families, in Churchill, Gillam, Herchmer, Ilford, Thompson, Pikwitonei, Thicket Portage, The Pas. All along the bayline, Manitobans and their families depend upon the Port of Churchill, and depend upon the Port of Churchill receiving its fair share of Canada's grain exports.

We are speaking to the dilemma faced by the small businessowner in Churchill who called me the other day because he was concerned about the future of the port. He was concerned that, if the port does not open, his business will suffer. He wanted to expand his business by building onto the facility he owned for more space. What we say here today will touch that Churchill businessperson and his family. The other day, a young Native woman who normally works at the port called me because she had not been called back to work yet.

Normally, there would be 130 to 140 people working at the port today. Unfortunately, there are only 80 workers. Those are numbers, but what we are talking about are young Native women, young men, people from all over the province who come to the Port of Churchill to work. Those other 50 to 60 employees and their families are listening very carefully to what we say here today, and they are looking to us today. They are looking to each and every one of us for a strong, unified, unequivocal support of their port, their community, their future.

I spoke recently to railway workers in Gillam and Churchill, and they are worried about their jobs. They are listening to us today. They are depending upon us today. Those are the people who elected me four times in the past number of years to represent their interests in this Legislature. More importantly, they are my friends. They are my friends whom I trust and who trust me. Conservative Members in this Legislature often accuse myself and my NDP colleagues of using this issue for political purposes. They say that almost to suggest that we should not speak out on every occasion and in every way in support of the port.

This is a political issue. What is needed is political willpower. What is needed is a political commitment by the federal Government to use the Port of Churchill to its fullest capacity. That is why it was so regrettable that, just today, the federal Conservative Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board showed us that political will is lacking. Charlie Mayer said today, both publicly and privately, that he will not ask the Canadian Wheat Board, for which he has ultimate responsibility, to ship grain through the Port of Churchill this year to ensure that grain flows to and through that port. As long as he takes that position and as long as any Member in this Legislature stands and defends or excuses that lack of political commitment, I will stand in this Legislature and apply as much political pressure as I can to ensure that lack of political willpower does not continue any longer.

What is needed for the Port of Churchill now is political pressure. As long as political pressure is needed to support the Port of Churchill, I and my colleagues and others in this Chamber will use every opportunity, both inside this Chamber and outside this Legislature, to bring political pressure to bear on those who lack political will. That is why this debate is so very important.

Today our voices must be loud, our voices must be strong and, as much as is possible in an arena such as this, we must speak with one voice, for our voices, our individual voices and our collective voices, today must reach out beyond these walls. They must reach out to those in Churchill and those in Gillam, those in Ilford, Pikwitonei, The Pas and all along the bayline. They must hear what we are saying here today and we must speak clearly to them. We must offer them support by showing that we care about what is happening to them. We must join our voices with theirs and have them join their voices with ours to speak out to those who lack political willpower. That collective multitude of voices must carry all the way to Ottawa so that there can be no doubt as to our resolve to fight for the future of the Port of Churchill.

\* (1730)

I am concerned, therefore, when the Leader of the Conservative Government, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) of this province, stands in his place and gives the type of speech which he just gave. I want those to know who are listening to us today that type of speech does not reflect the feelings on this side of the House. That type of speech does no justice to the very critical and urgent crisis that is before us. They lost an opportunity in the Budget, I believe, Mr. Speaker. He just lost an opportunity here to add to that strong, unified, united voice. But, in spite of his failing, I can assure you that every Member on this side of the House will stand strong in support of Churchill. We will use every opportunity that we have to carry on the struggle and the battle for an effective shipping season in the Port of Churchill this year and every year, and we will not ever stop the fight, whether it be political or otherwise, until the Port of Churchill receives its fair share of the grain export shipments from this country.

It is not charity that we ask for, nor do the members of the railway union, the members of the Port of Churchill, the small businesspeople in the community. It is not they who ask for charity. All they ask for is a fair share, and I believe that is the very least that we can give back to them in return.

So I thank you for your decision today, and I thank all Members of this House for the opportunity to enter into a debate that is so very crucial to the many hundreds and thousands of individuals in northern Manitoba who look to us for support and look to us for guidance.

**Hon. John Penner (Minister of Natural Resources):** Mr. Speaker, it is certainly a pleasure to rise in the House to speak on the issue of the Port of Churchill and the ability of Manitobans to utilize their port. I certainly sympathize with those Members who sit opposite and voice their concerns about the ability and the survival of a community. I think that is really what is at issue here is the ability of a community to survive. Mr. Speaker, I think it is imperative for those of us who sit in this Chamber and make decisions on behalf of the people of this province to talk about communities' abilities to survive.

I think it is also important that we recognize that we must feel and have a feel for the economic impact of the drought that we are facing today, because we will next year as legislators sit in this Chamber and address problems that are much, much greater than the problem of shipping grain through any port, whether it is Vancouver or whether it is Churchill or whether it is Thunder Bay. Next year at this time, we will hear people say that we did not grow half as much grain this year as we did the previous year. Those of us who know the grains industry and the farm community recognize full well that the whole total industry is dependent on grain movement at any time of year.

I want to say, and I will be very brief, that there are many things that I think we need to recognize, and the one thing that is most important that we must recognize is that any given town in this province cannot be

dependent on one industry. Therefore, I think it is imperative that those of us sitting in this Legislature, whether we are NDP's or whether we are Liberals or whether we are Conservatives, pay some attention to diverting our attention to establishing and assisting in establishing multiple industries that can be viable in Churchill and in other towns.

I would hope that the attention that this issue has focused on Churchill will lead us all to a different thought process, and recognize that there are other things that can be done to provide employment opportunities in the towns and villages other than transporting grain. I think it is important that those of us who sit here and want to discuss the possibility of intervening, of a political intervention, in an institution that has served the farm community well over many years in marketing the commodities that individual farmers simply were not able to market on their own for many, many years without political intervention. It behooves me to beg this House that we go on record to indicate very clearly to the Prime Minister of Canada and the Minister of the Canadian Wheat Board not to politicize that very sacred institution that farmers depend on for the market of their grain.

We have sat many, many times as organizations in western Canada and discussed this very same issue—whether we should or should not. There have been many studies done on the costing of shipping of grain through the various ports that we have at our disposal. There was one, and I agree with what the Member opposite said before, the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan)—or was it the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman)?—that there was a study done that indicated it was as economical or probably more economical to ship grain through Churchill than it was through Thunder Bay. But let us recognize when that study was done. It was done in 1986 or prior to 1986. It was tabled in 1986.

I would suggest to you that the economics of shipping grain have changed since then because we have since then brought on the Port of Rupert. It is much more economical to ship and load grain through the West Coast ports now for the farmer, to the farmer, than it was prior to 1986. We should recognize that. We must realize that things and times change and economics change and that we are very dependent, that the farm community is very dependent and has been very dependent on the ability to access the most economical ports, whether that be Churchill or whether that be the West Coast or whether it be the East Coast, but have access to the most economical ports to move their commodities out of this country. That, Mr. Speaker, I think is the key.

The most important issue here, and if there are other things that must be done, is to ensure that employment opportunities are maintained at Churchill. I think that is what we should be discussing here—and other employment opportunities and maybe recognize that the economics of doing business at the Port of Churchill has somewhat diminished over the past years.

I say to you that the biggest service we could do for the people at Churchill would be to indicate to them that we recognize the dilemma they are in. We recognize

the unemployment that they are facing and we are going to address that issue, we are going to discuss those very issues with our federal counterparts, and that we, as a province, are going to pay attention to that.

That, Mr. Speaker, in my estimation, should have been the nature of the debate that we were entered into here today and we would have spent our time more wisely.

**Mr. Ed Mandrake (Assiniboia):** I am pleased to be able to speak on the resolution on the Port of Churchill. To say I was dismayed—no, I was annoyed—that the Honourable Member, Charlie Mayer, who is the Minister from Manitoba, had adopted such a negative attitude regarding the crisis at the Port of Churchill and not meeting with this committee.

Under the 1984 Port Development Plan between the then-Liberal Government and the Province of Manitoba, the Wheat Board was instructed to give its best efforts, and we see what the efforts are to ensure shipment of a minimum of 3 percent of total exports of wheat to Churchill.

Mr. First Minister (Mr. Filmon), please speak to your Leader in Ottawa and tell him to have his Minister responsible for the Wheat Board instruct the Wheat Board to adhere to the 1984 agreement, if not for this year guaranteed, then assure them that they will get the shipment for 1989.

Your colleague, Charlie Mayer, is quoted in the paper as saying, "The cost of going to Churchill has been higher than other ports, and we cannot force the Wheat Board to do anything about it." Yet in a letter from the Wheat Board, signed by Ian McCurrie, dated April 21, 1988, he states the following: "Rail rates from The Pas/Churchill, producer payment \$4.66, government payment 17.76, total 22.42; Thunder Bay, producer 6.34, government pays 24.12, 30.46; West Coast, 8.74, government pays 33.27, 42.01." You call that common sense. Where is your sense now?

Mr. Speaker, if we were able to convince the Wheat Board to ship the wheat to Churchill today, has the Wheat Board done its homework and sold the wheat to the Eastern Bloc countries? This is the question we should be addressing. If the Wheat Board has not done its homework, then I would strongly suggest that it undertake it today to sell our barley to the Eastern Bloc countries for 1989. Thank you very much.

**Mr. Plohman:** Mr. Speaker, I am anxious to participate in this debate. First of all, I want to say how saddened I was by the comments made by the First Minister, by the Premier (Mr. Filmon).

I sat here and could not help but reflect on the comments made by the Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Angus) when he talked about the attitude of this Government insofar as this debate is concerned. I think that the Premier exemplified that problem that this Government has better than anyone of them on that side, or I could say worse than anyone of them.

\* (1740)

His sarcastic comments, his sarcastic remarks and his display of a lack of respect for the Members of this

House and the motives that he attributed to all of the Members of this House as they stood up in defence of Churchill bothered me a great deal, because he seemed to be talking about political expediency in the hearts of everyone of the Members that were speaking. I do not think that that does service to this debate and to this issue.

He talked about self-serving statements that have been made by Members here, and I think that is regrettable. He talked about their own unwavering commitment and that they could join easily with all Members of this House in working to support Churchill. Every time Members stood up and from their seats we saw support for Churchill that was qualified support; yet excuses one after another—whether it was the Member for Rhineland (Mr. Penner) or the Member for Portage (Mr. Connelly) as he sat there, the Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey) or the Premier (Mr. Filmon) himself. They talked of supporting Churchill on one hand; on the other hand, they talked about ifs, ands or buts, and that is not good enough. We have to have unqualified support for Churchill at this particular time in our history.

I was encouraged by some of the speakers that spoke here today. The Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles), when she talked about this being an issue for all of Manitoba, it is an important issue for northern Manitoba and for the community of Churchill itself; but it is also important for all of Manitoba because it exemplifies how successive national Governments have treated Manitoba and that is what we are really dealing with here today.

The Premier (Mr. Filmon) of this province seems to be giving up, seems to be blaming, seems to be striking out. He seems hurt and wounded because of this debate, embarrassed because of this debate, embarrassed because he could not get results when he spoke to the First Minister of this country—Brian Mulroney. When he went and raised all those hopes and said he was going to get so much from that Prime Minister and he came back empty-handed and now this debate, he is taking it so personally. He should not take it personally. It is much more than one individual, even if it is the Premier.

But he should not strike out at previous Governments. We did not accomplish everything—we know that—with regard to Churchill, but we undertook efforts that were unprecedented in this province in conjunction with the national Government at that time when Lloyd Axworthy was the federal Minister and the New Democratic Government was the Government at the provincial level. We signed a \$93 million agreement with \$58 million of provincial money for that port. That was unprecedented, that was real dedication and effort toward rejuvenating the economy. The Conservatives have opposed that over the years.

When the First Minister of this province talks about nothing, why does he not reflect on that \$58 million investment and all of the things that have been done, including a new hydro transmission line to help diversify the economy, the money and effort that were put into boxcar rehabilitation, stabilization of the line, a new tug, a new air terminal and so on for Churchill—all of

those efforts? Now it is up to this Government to build on those efforts, to expand on those efforts, to follow through as the studies called for that were undertaken in 1986, the IBI studies that were referred to by a number of Members.

I just want to address briefly the issue of politicizing the Wheat Board on this issue, because it has been raised as the issue that prevents us from moving any further forward on this issue, the Wheat Board. Now let us just look at it. I believe that it is time in this country for the Wheat Board to be used as an instrument of national policy for social and economic development. That happens from time to time.

Everyone is so worried about the word “politicization.” Let us look at it. What has happened? Is there any Member in here, in this House, who would think that the grain companies have not had an influence on the Wheat Board’s dealings? The UGG and Pioneer Grain and Cargill and all those grain companies with their facilities at other ports, have they not had an impact in a small “p” political way on what they are doing? I say yes, it is already politicized at that level. Surely, it would not be bad, in the national interest, to use it to develop certain areas of this country for social and economic objectives.

I want to say we do not need handouts for Churchill. Churchill stands on its own. It is the most frugal port, the most efficient port for shipments from a large area of this country. Check the studies. Clearly, the IBI studies demonstrate that from the catchment area. So we do not need handouts; but if we did, I would say an argument could still be made for sovereignty reasons, for vision reasons, vision for our country, for nation building.

We have to look at this at much more than just grain. Others have said that, but we have to look at the role that this port can play in Canada’s future and Canada’s North and development. If this was in other areas of the country, there would be no doubt about the priority that Churchill would get, like the Hibernia oil fields in Newfoundland. We deserve, in Manitoba, better treatment than we have been getting. We deserve action on the part of this federal Government, and that is what we are demanding here today.

**Hon. Edward Connelly (Minister of Labour):** I just wanted to make a few comments on the Churchill situation.

Last year, I took the opportunity to go North and I visited the Port of Churchill and the Town of Churchill. I found that it was a beautiful town. There was a lot to see and I think there is a lot to be done for the Port of Churchill. Unfortunately, this group is just talking about the grain-handling situation. There is a lot more to Churchill than just grain handling. We have tourism. The Leader of the NDP said that they quadrupled tourism in his term. The best guess is that, in a 10-year period, they might be lucky to double it. It would be nice if the Leader of the NDP for once would be factual but, nevertheless, he thinks he can quadruple it. What ever he says, he thinks is the truth and there is a lot of untruth.

The port can be viable. It takes a high volume of grain, we have got to have it there. I hope that, as a group, we can work to make Churchill a viable port. It is a great place to have. I support the Port of Churchill.

**Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice):** One of our prospering northern communities is in jeopardy here today. That is the Town of Churchill and the surrounding communities.

I too have had the opportunity and the pleasure to be in the Town of Churchill. I have spent time there and worked with the schoolchildren, with the people who live in the community and with the professionals and the paraprofessionals of the health centre.

Many of the Members here today have expounded far better than I can about the importance of the Port of Churchill and its viability as an alternate port in Manitoba. I quote from a letter, Mr. Speaker, to a Mr. Redgefod (phonetic) from the Honourable First Minister (Mr. Filmon) in January of this year, in which he said as well: "As I have indicated in this past, my colleagues and I remain committed to the maximum utilization of the Port of Churchill, which represents a viable alternative for western grain producers."

My comments this afternoon are directed to my great concerns and difficulties with the Honourable Minister of Transport's (Mr. Albert Driedger) comments about the uselessness of the three-Party committee, because you are saying we now are discussing this as a matter of urgent public debate. With all due respect, I have some concerns that the Minister of Transport understands the concept of effective lobby.

Effective lobby involves taking every appropriate and responsible opportunity to put forth a particular point of view. Certainly today, us debating this matter of urgent importance shows to the people of Manitoba, to the federal Government, a representative of which is in the building today, and puts on the record of Hansard that, in fact, we believe very strongly about this particular issue. That is part of effective lobbying. That does negate the usefulness of the three-Party committee. In fact, the concern as presented by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition is that, because Mr. Mayer has chosen not to meet with the three-Party committee, perhaps it shall be rendered somewhat useless and an empty shell. That is our concern.

We are having some difficulty today with the First Minister's (Mr. Filmon) refusal to take a risk on behalf of the people of Manitoba. The First Minister has a golden opportunity because of his self-proclaimed special relationship with the First Minister of Canada. He has the opportunity to talk to Mr. Mulroney and to urge the Prime Minister of Canada, to urge Mr. Mayer, to sit down with the three-Party committee, to spend his time judiciously in Manitoba and have open, honest discussion and consultation.

\* (1750)

I wonder, is the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) reluctant to say, yes, I will talk to my federal friend and urge his cooperation for the best interests of Manitoba. Is the First Minister timid to say, yes, I will put that phonecall through, because he is afraid that the Prime Minister

will say no. Well I say to the First Minister, better to have shown true concern to this Legislative Assembly and to Manitobans, to have shown leadership in this province and have failed, than to not take the risk at all.

The First Minister talks about a whole group of players in this game. Well, I like football and I say to the First Minister: Is the First Minister willing to be the quarterback or is he going to sit on the sidelines as the third string?

I, as well, in discussing this matter of urgent importance, have a lot of difficulty with the First Minister's (Mr. Filmon) comments today—I have a lot of difficulty with his comments any day, but particularly today—when he tries to imply and say to us on this side of the House that we should be ashamed because we have worked together with the N.D. Party and vice versa. We are not ashamed of our working together on this side of the House to bring a matter of urgent public importance to the Legislative Assembly and to let the people of Manitoba know what our concerns are. We are not ashamed that we have been able to work together in the true form of democracy in this Legislative Assembly this afternoon.

**Mr. Elijah Harper (Rupertsland):** I would like to take a few minutes to speak in support of this resolution. I have been to the Port of Churchill a few times. Presently, the resolution that is before us is a very important issue which should be dealt with by the Members of this House.

I must say that I am disappointed with the Premier (Mr. Filmon) of this province for not representing the interests of the people of Manitoba, especially the people who are most going to be affected by the lack of transportation or the movement of grain through the Port of Churchill. There are many people who will be affected. As mentioned before, usually about this time of the year, there are about 130 to 140 people who are employed as a result of the shipment of the grain through the Port of Churchill. I must say that there are many other people who are affected by the shipment of grain through the bayline. Along those many stops that the shipment cars are going through, there are many Northerners and Native people who are affected by the lack of action of this Government and also the insensitivity of the federal Government.

I must say that we established a legislative committee to deal with this important issue and, as a result of this morning's inaction of the federal Minister responsible for this issue, it has demonstrated a lack of political will to deal with this resolution that was adopted by all the 57 Members of this Assembly. I think it is an insult to all Manitobans.

I must say also that the kind of relationship that we had in our term of Government with the present Conservative Government in Ottawa was not, I feel, all that great or the federal Government was not responding to our needs because I felt that there was some political posturing of the federal Government.

I also feel that the Minister responsible for Native Affairs, the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey)

should stand up and be counted with the Native people, and stand up for his position and talk with his colleague in Ottawa, the Minister of Indian Affairs, where his priorities lie with the Native people. They are certainly going to be affected by the Port of Churchill, the decisions that are being made.

I must point out that this country is a unique country and we, as Native people, have never really been recognized as developing this country. It is oftentimes frustrating to have deaf ears from a senior Government in Ottawa to deal with the important issues that Native people face. The money that the federal Government is spending presently is going to Newfoundland and also to the development of the Atlantic Agency and in Quebec. When I see the federal Department of Indian Affairs granting \$9.5 million to a Japanese paper company, in which the Lubicon (phonetic) Indian people wanted that piece of land and offering a foreign company \$9.5 million, says something to me in this country of where this federal Government's priority lies. I might have said that they should have offered the Lubicon Indians some land and then given them the \$9.5 million, and then supported the Indian people for a joint partnership.

That is the kind of leadership that this Prime Minister is leading. I must say that our provincial Leader should be standing up for all Manitobans, including the Native people in the Province of Manitoba. I look forward to the support of the Minister responsible for Native Affairs (Mr. Downey) providing leadership in that area.

When I speak about the Canadian Constitution, I say that it is a unique country and when I talk about the recognition of disparities across the country, there is certainly a recognition in the Constitution about the equalization, that we should get the fair share of the resources that are available in this country. Certainly Manitoba needs to get their fair share, not necessarily get a special treatment, but all we are asking for is a fair share of the money that is being distributed across this country. We see money flowing into Newfoundland and also into Quebec and into the Atlantic provinces, and basically it looks like they are buying some votes there because election is coming forth.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Harold Taylor (Wolseley):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I would like to start off my participation in this debate by, first of all, saying that my compliments to you on the two decisions that you had to make in regard to this debate earlier this afternoon.

I am familiar with Churchill, having visited it in all seasons. I understand its desires and its needs. I have met with many of its residents, its businesspeople, its professionals, and its community leaders.

Western farmers located within the traditional Churchill catchment area know that it is cheaper to

ship their grain through Churchill than through the Great Lake ports. This port is in fact the most efficient now in all of Canada in its grain-handling capabilities. What Churchill now needs is firm, sincere and effective advocacy, not only for its continuing existence but also to its much deserved expansion role as the Prairie seaport.

At a meeting just the other day of an all-Party committee of this House, there was assurance of C.N.'s cooperation and of the support of the Grain Transportation Authority for the provision of grain cars and train crews. It has been suggested that Churchill is not dependent. It has been suggested that Churchill is dependent on barley only as a commodity to be shipped out of it and that therefore, because there is no barley in the catchment area, there will be no grain for Churchill.

Well, I say to that, hogwash. I think what we have got to look at is what is in that catchment area, and bear in mind that it is only in very recent years that barley has been a single type of commodity that has been shipped out of there. Before that, it was mixed grains with a dependency on wheat, and I think we should go back to that sort of a situation.

It was with interest that I noted all the improvements under way to improve the Port of Churchill such as—these were mentioned by the Government Ministers—the upgrading of the grain-handling equipment, the dredging for the harbour and the approaches, the construction of a new and more powerful tugboat, the recently completed high-voltage transmission line, the railcar refurbishing and the rail line upgradings. All of these, by the way, were contained in the northern Manitoba ERDA which was negotiated with the previous Government by the federal Liberals, and I am glad they are giving credit where credit is due.

\* (1800)

Federal Conservative Members have not been noteworthy in their success in -(Interjection)- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My best stuff is still coming.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hour being 6 p.m., I am interrupting procedures according to the Rules and, pursuant to Rule 21.(4), this debate is terminated.

**Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader):** In accordance with Rule 65.(6.1), I am tabling today for the information of all Honourable Members the sequence for consideration of the Estimates of the various Government departments by each section of the Committee of Supply. I have already provided the Clerk of the Legislature (Mr. Remnant) with a copy of this sequence.

**Mr. Speaker:** The House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow (Friday).