



Second Session - Thirty-Seventh Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Standing Committee

on

Agriculture

Chairperson

Mr. Stan Struthers

Constituency of Dauphin-Roblin



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Seventh Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
AGLUGUB, Cris	The Maples	N.D.P.
ALLAN, Nancy	St. Vital	N.D.P.
ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	N.D.P.
ASPER, Linda	Riel	N.D.P.
BARRETT, Becky, Hon.	Inkster	N.D.P.
CALDWELL, Drew, Hon.	Brandon East	N.D.P.
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	N.D.P.
CUMMINGS, Glen	Ste. Rose	P.C.
DACQUAY, Louise	Seine River	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard	Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	N.D.P.
DOER, Gary, Hon.	Concordia	N.D.P.
DRIEDGER, Myrna	Charleswood	P.C.
DYCK, Peter	Pembina	P.C.
ENNS, Harry	Lakeside	P.C.
FAURSCHOU, David	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
FRIESEN, Jean, Hon.	Wolseley	N.D.P.
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GILLESHAMMER, Harold	Minnedosa	P.C.
HELWER, Edward	Gimli	P.C.
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	N.D.P.
JENNISSON, Gerard	Flin Flon	N.D.P.
KORZENIOWSKI, Bonnie	St. James	N.D.P.
LATHLIN, Oscar, Hon.	The Pas	N.D.P.
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	P.C.
LEMIEUX, Ron, Hon.	La Verendrye	N.D.P.
LOEWEN, John	Fort Whyte	P.C.
MACKINTOSH, Gord, Hon.	St. Johns	N.D.P.
MAGUIRE, Larry	Arthur-Virden	P.C.
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	N.D.P.
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	N.D.P.
McGIFFORD, Diane, Hon.	Lord Roberts	N.D.P.
MIHYCHUK, MaryAnn, Hon.	Minto	N.D.P.
MITCHELSON, Bonnie	River East	P.C.
MURRAY, Stuart	Kirkfield Park	P.C.
NEVAKSHONOFF, Tom	Interlake	N.D.P.
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	P.C.
PENNER, Jim	Steinbach	P.C.
PITURA, Frank	Morris	P.C.
PRAZNIK, Darren	Lac du Bonnet	P.C.
REID, Daryl	Transcona	N.D.P.
REIMER, Jack	Southdale	P.C.
ROBINSON, Eric, Hon.	Rupertsland	N.D.P.
ROCAN, Denis	Carman	P.C.
RONDEAU, Jim	Assiniboia	N.D.P.
SALE, Tim, Hon.	Fort Rouge	N.D.P.
SANTOS, Conrad	Wellington	N.D.P.
SCHELLENBERG, Harry	Rossmere	N.D.P.
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield	P.C.
SELINGER, Greg, Hon.	St. Boniface	N.D.P.
SMITH, Joy	Fort Garry	P.C.
SMITH, Scott, Hon.	Brandon West	N.D.P.
STEFANSON, Heather	Tuxedo	P.C.
STRUTHERS, Stan	Dauphin-Roblin	N.D.P.
TWEED, Mervin	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann, Hon.	Swan River	N.D.P.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Wednesday, May 9, 2001

TIME – 7:30 p.m.

LOCATION – Winnipeg, Manitoba

**CHAIRPERSON – Mr. Stan Struthers
(Dauphin-Roblin)**

**VICE-CHAIRPERSON – Mr. Tom
Nevakshonoff (Interlake)**

ATTENDANCE - 14 – QUORUM - 8

Members of the Committee present:

Hon. Messrs. Gerrard, Smith (Brandon West), Hon. Ms. Wowchuk

Messrs. Aglugub, Dewar, Maguire, Nevakshonoff, Penner (Emerson), Pitura, Schellenberg, Struthers

Substitutions

Hon. Mr. Ashton for Hon. Mr. Lemieux
Mr. Tweed for Mr. Cummings
Mr. Derkach for Mr. Praznik at 8:45 p.m.
Mr. Santos for Mr. Aglugub at 8:45 p.m.

MATTERS UNDER DISCUSSION:

All-Party Resolution on Federal Support for Agriculture; Proposition présentée par tous les partis au sujet de l'aide fédérale à l'agriculture

* * *

Mr. Chairperson: Good evening. Will the Standing Committee on Agriculture please come to order. Tonight the committee will be considering the province's All-Party Resolution on Federal Support for Agriculture.

Committee Substitutions

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): With leave of the committee, I would like to move that the

honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) replace the honourable Member for La Verendrye (Mr. Lemieux) as a member of the Standing Committee on Agriculture, effective immediately. As per the agreement made in the House on April 19, 2001, the House will be officially informed of the substitution in the official report of this committee.

Mr. Chairperson: It has been moved by the Member for Selkirk that the Member for Thompson replace the honourable Member for La Verendrye as a member of the Standing Committee on Agriculture, effective immediately. Is there agreement of the committee? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Frank Pitura (Morris): With leave of the committee, I would like to move that the honourable Member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Tweed) replace the honourable Member for Ste. Rose as a member of the Standing Committee on Agriculture, effective May 9. As per agreement made in the House on April 19, 2001, the House will be officially informed of the substitution in the official report of this committee.

Mr. Chairperson: It has been moved by Mr. Pitura that the Member for Turtle Mountain replace the honourable Member for Ste. Rose as a member of the Standing Committee on Agriculture, effective May 9. Is there agreement of the committee? *[Agreed]*

* * *

Mr. Chairperson: How does the committee wish to proceed with consideration of the resolution?

Hon. Rosann Wowchuk (Minister of Agriculture and Food): Mr. Chairman, we had a lot of discussion the other night on this resolution, and I had indicated that I would be bringing amendments forward to the resolution as we prepare it for the Legislature. I would like

to distribute the amendments that I have and then go through them.

I move that the Resolution on Federal Support for Agriculture be amended:

By adding, after the seventh WHEREAS clause:

WHEREAS the Standing Committee has heard presentations on the need for federal support for agriculture during four public hearings held across Manitoba;

By amending the first RESOLVED clause to read:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Standing Committee on Agriculture recommend that, based on the public consultations, the federal government recognize federal support for farmers in other countries, and provide at least another \$500 million in short-term support for grains and oilseeds producers; and

By amending the fifth RESOLVED clause to read:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Standing Committee on Agriculture recommend that the federal and provincial governments review current safety net programs, such as the Canadian Farm Income Program (CFIP), and crop insurance to ensure that they are meeting the needs of all Canadian producers equitably; and

By amending the sixth RESOLVED clause to read:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Standing Committee on Agriculture, having heard a number of suggestions for value-added processing, such as additional ethanol production and new varieties of sugar beet, recommend that the provincial and federal governments pursue these opportunities for rural communities; and

By deleting the third, fourth, seventh and eighth RESOLVED clauses.

By adding three new RESOLVED clauses at the end of the resolution to read:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Standing Committee send the Hansard and Committee Report to the Honourable Jean Chrétien, Prime Minister of Canada, and the Honourable Lyle Vanclief, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, for their consideration of the committee's request for additional support for grains and oilseeds producers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Standing Committee send an invitation to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Agriculture to come to Manitoba, to receive the Hansard and Report of the Standing Committee hearings, and to hear further presentations directly from Manitobans; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Honourable Gary Doer, Premier of Manitoba, write to the Honourable Jean Chrétien, Prime Minister of Canada, requesting a meeting to discuss this important issue.

Mr. Chairperson, given that there are so many amendments, I would like to distribute a copy of what the resolution would look like if these amendments are accepted.

Mr. Chairperson: It has been moved by the Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk)

THAT the resolution on "Federal Support for Agriculture" be amended:

By adding, after the seventh "WHEREAS" clause:

WHEREAS the Standing Committee—

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Mr. Chairperson: Dispense.

An Honourable Member: No, no, excuse me.

Ms. Wowchuk: You want him to read it all?

An Honourable Member: Yes, I think it is important to read.

Ms. Wowchuk: Okay, sorry. Oh, okay.

Mr. Chairperson: A request has been made to read the motion, so I will read the motion that was proposed. It has been moved by the Minister of Agriculture

THAT the resolution on "Federal Support for Agriculture" be amended:

By adding, after the seventh "WHEREAS" clause:

WHEREAS the Standing Committee has heard presentations on the need for federal support for agriculture during four public hearings held across Manitoba.

By amending the first RESOLVED clause to read:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Standing Committee on Agriculture recommend that, based on the public consultations, the federal government recognize federal support for farmers in other countries, and provide at least another \$500 million in short-term support for grains and oilseeds producers.

By amending the fifth RESOLVED clause to read:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Standing Committee on Agriculture recommend that the federal and provincial governments review current safety net programs, such as the Canadian Farm Income Program (CFIP), and crop insurance to ensure that they are meeting the needs of all Canadian producers equitably; and

By amending the sixth RESOLVED clause to read:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Standing Committee on Agriculture, having heard a number of suggestions for value-added processing, such as additional ethanol production and new variety of sugar beet, recommend that the provincial and federal governments pursue these opportunities for rural communities; and

By deleting the third, fourth, seventh and eighth RESOLVED clauses.

By adding three new RESOLVED clauses at the end of the resolution to read:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Standing Committee send the Hansard and Committee Report to the Honourable Jean Chrétien, Prime Minister of Canada, and the Honourable Lyle VanClief, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, for their consideration of the committee's request for additional support for grains and oilseeds producers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Standing Committee send an invitation to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Agriculture to come to Manitoba, to receive the Hansard and Report of the Standing Committee hearings, and to hear further presentations directly from Manitobans; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Honourable Gary Doer, Premier of Manitoba, write to the Honourable Jean Chrétien, Prime Minister of Canada, requesting a meeting to discuss this important issue.

The motion is in order.

* (19:40)

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, we discussed the other night that we wanted to have this resolution and a report go back to the Legislature. Given the presentations that we have heard, and certainly there were many of them, the amendments have been drafted to reflect what we heard from the standing committee. Certainly, if you look at the first: WHEREAS the standing committee has heard presentations on the need for federal support for agriculture during four public hearings—there were four public hearings, and we want to incorporate that into the resolution.

The other ones, Mr. Chairman, are changing the RESOLVEDs that were in the beginning resolution to reflect what we heard at the standing committee. If you look at the first one, it is: THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the federal government to recognize federal support supplied in other countries and immediately provide at least a further \$500 million of assistance. The amend-

ment is changed slightly to reflect what we heard at the committee.

Many of the presenters talked about there being safety net programs and the inadequacy of some of the programs and also the need to review the safety net programs. So, in this amendment, it points out that the safety net programs such as CFIP and Crop Insurance need to be reviewed to ensure that they meet the needs of all Canadian producers equitably, and, certainly, equitableness is an issue that was raised by many presenters who talked about the formula and the inequity of the previous \$500 million not being targeted at the grains and oilseeds producers.

The next BE IT RESOLVED, the sixth one, the primary resolution gives direction to the committee to look at value-added. The standing committee heard from presenters suggestions for value-added, and in this RESOLVED we point out as an example ethanol production and a new variety of sugar beets.

Certainly, there were other suggestions, and those are only two that are an example of what we heard, but, again, by amending that THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, it reflects what we heard from the producers, from municipalities and from residents of rural Manitoba.

Then, if we look further on, Nos. 3 and 4 become redundant because it says: BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be referred to the standing committee and that that committee be empowered to make such changes to the wording of the resolution as the committee deems advisable. That is something we are doing here. So we are addressing that one, and 7 and 8 have been addressed in the others, reflecting what we heard from—no, 7 and 8 are not reflecting what we heard.

Number 7 says: BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Standing Committee on Agriculture hold such meetings at such times and places as it deemed advisable to receive briefs and hear representation. That has been addressed, and No. 8, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Standing Committee on Agriculture report to the Assembly in a timely

fashion. Again, we want to amend the resolution to reflect what we heard in the presentations.

The next three RESOLVEDs are the resolution. Certainly, we had a lot of discussion about that the other night, about how this should be reported to the federal government and what steps should be taken. Reflecting on what people have said, the first one is to send the report to the Prime Minister and the federal Minister of Agriculture. I think that it is very important that they receive the report and have the opportunity to read the report and Hansard on what was said at these committees.

The next RESOLVED is to invite the House of Commons Standing Committee on Agriculture to come to Manitoba. We had discussion about that the other night as well, where some felt that was not the only step or the most appropriate step to be taken. My view and our caucus's view is that it is very important that we have federal people finally come to western Canada and hear first-hand the stories that have been out here, that we heard, have the human face put onto it. Certainly, I think that is very important, that the federal government recognize the west is an important part of the economy of Canada, and the West has a very serious financial problem, particular in our grains and oilseeds sector, and we want that addressed.

The other is, and there was a lot of discussion about this as well, we had discussion with the Premier (Mr. Doer), and this amendment will direct the Premier to write to the Prime Minister and request a meeting to discuss this issue. That certainly reflects what we heard at the committee and what we heard from members of the committee last week, or two days ago, I should say, saying that having the standing committee coming here was not enough. Certainly, having the standing committee is one approach. The other approach is to contact the Prime Minister. We have had this discussion, and, along with sending the report, the Premier is requesting a meeting with the Prime Minister.

The amendments, I believe, that have been brought forward reflect what we heard at the standing committee and amend the resolution in a way to remove those clauses that are redundant

and add in clauses that reflect what we heard from the producers and from municipal leaders. Certainly, if I look at what we have here, letters and presentations, there have been requests from AMM for more participation from the federal government. There have been requests. KAP has supported the issue of more support for the farmers. So those are the amendments that I put forward.

I would appreciate discussion and comments on those amendments and look forward to having them passed, so that we might be able to deal with this resolution and then deal with the report. We have the draft report that was circulated the other night. We did not hear very much comment on the report, whether people had any objection to what was written in it, so I am assuming that the report meets the committee's needs. Certainly, there has not been any discussion on that. I am sure there will be input on what the report should be, going back to the Legislature. I think it is very important that we move this along.

There was discussion the other night about timeliness, and I think it is very timely that we move forward on this and report back to the Legislature, and then begin the next steps that we have to take. That is getting the message to the federal government and trying to get the additional support for our producers the need of which has been expressed so eloquently by many, many people who made presentations to this committee.

* (19:50)

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): We are enlightened by the fact that the minister has listened and relinquished her rigid position. We understand the difficulty the minister has had in the debate that we had the other day, and we respect that.

We are encouraged also by the fact that the minister is willing to concede that there is significant need to approach the Prime Minister for a meeting. We are encouraged by the changes that she has made in the resolution reflecting, to a much greater degree, what was said at many of the farm meetings. However, I want to indicate clearly from this side of the

committee that the \$500 million, in the fourth WHEREAS and the fifth WHEREAS, indicates our request now as a committee. We want to indicate to you what we heard in the committee from presenter after presenter: that the additional \$500 million simply would not be nearly adequate to address the hurt. We understand and we recognize and accept the fact that a WHEREAS is simply a WHEREAS.

However, we want to reflect clearly in a final resolve that there is a much greater need than the \$500 million. We believe that it is our committee's responsibility to reflect correctly what the people of Manitoba told us. Be they farmers, be they farm business people, be they municipal leaders—indeed, representing many councils and communities in all of Manitoba—they reflected, clearly, a much greater need than an additional \$500 million to address the shortfalls which were recognized by the minister's own department, based on last year's number being anywhere between \$30 and \$60 an acre.

That is by the numbers that had been put out by the Department of Agriculture, the minister's own department. We think that, clearly, there needs to be wording put in place in this resolution that reflects with clarity what we heard, because we promised the people of Manitoba that this committee would come out and hear, and would come out and listen and present their wishes to the federal government.

So I would urge the minister to make some wording changes in the fifth WHEREAS and the fourth WHEREAS. We could say, WHEREAS the federal government responded with \$500 million dependent upon a provincial contribution of 40 which was denounced as inadequate by farmers.

We will leave that one. I have no problem with that one. Then, WHEREAS the provincial Agricultural ministers from Manitoba, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario requested an additional \$500 million. We should add another resolve to that. And WHEREAS we clearly heard the people of Manitoba, from farm communities to community leaders to municipal representatives, tell this committee time and time again that the additional \$500 million were not

enough, and that we need to correctly reflect the losses that have been incurred. If we wanted to put those numbers in place—the numbers that we heard more than once were between \$40 and \$60 an acre would be required to even come close to offsetting the losses. If we could add that, too, as a WHEREAS, then I think we would come close to reflecting the reality of what we heard.

I think that is, above all, our responsibility as a committee, to correctly reflect what was said. I would, therefore, move an amendment to this resolution, Mr. Chairman, and we can write that out, which would simply say, WHEREAS and further WHEREAS the Committee on Agriculture in Manitoba heard farmers, industry and municipal leaders declare that the \$500 million was not adequate, which has been expressed here; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that \$40 to \$60 an acre would be required to offset losses as determined by farmers, municipal leaders and the provincial minister's department; and then

WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba, despite limited financial resources, announced that it would provide \$38 million—we could continue from there.

But we can work that out.

* (20:00)

Mr. Chairperson: Just for the information of committee members, this is a subamendment to the minister's amendment, and we will just give Mr. Penner a second to write it out.

We will call the meeting back to order again. Thanks for your patience.

It has been moved by Mr. Penner that,

Following the fifth WHEREAS of the proposed amendment,

WHEREAS the Standing Committee on Agriculture, after listening to farmers, farm organizations, business leaders, and municipal officials, has determined that a payment of \$40 to \$60 per acre is required immediately.

The motion is in order.

Mr. Jack Penner: When the committee was originally established, we all agreed, all parties agreed, that we should make a sincere effort to reflect very carefully on what we had heard time and time again during the winter months when many of us toured communities all across the province. We did a very significant agriculture tour and we heard virtually identically what we heard during this committee's hearings.

I think the amendment that we are proposing clearly reflects an honest opinion expressed by the farm communities and all the other leaders of communities who spoke to the committee, and reflects verbatim what we were told by many, many farmers themselves, and the severity of the effect of the downturn in grain and oilseed prices, based on other countries subsidizing those very products the huge losses are being incurred on.

I would encourage the committee to support the amendment we are bringing forward. I think it would be an expression of faith in the support that we had asked from the farm community in expressing to us their needs. I think it would clearly demonstrate an expression of faith to the whole process and give credence to the entire hearing process. Therefore, I would encourage all members to consider supporting this amendment to the resolution.

Mr. Chairperson: Just before I recognize the next speaker, I want to remind everyone that we are speaking to the subamendment that was proposed by Mr. Penner. I have a speaking list that I was keeping on the amendment, which would see Mr. Gerrard speak next. Is it the will of the Committee that we continue with this speaking list that I have, or are there others who want to speak on the subamendment? Mr. Gerrard, did you want to speak on the subamendment now?

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): I have a subamendment to the subamendment. It is the amendment to the subamendment at this point.

* (20:10)

Mr. Penner: I wonder, on a matter of procedure in having chaired these committees on a number of occasions, in a previous lifetime, whether we

should not deal with the amendments as they come forward, or the sub-amendments, as they come forward. If there are more, but they should be dealt with on an individual basis instead of hearing other sub-amendments before this one is dealt with. I would suspect that might be proper procedure.

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Transportation and Government Services): I would recommend to the Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) I think Mr. Penner is quite correct. It is a much cleaner process, unless it actually deals with an addition to that amendment itself, you know, it adds a word or two. I mean, if it does add a word or two to the subamendment, that is appropriate, but if it— *[interjection]*

Mr. Chairperson: Thank you for that advice. If any of the committee members have subamendments to Mr. Penner's subamendment, we could deal with that now. Otherwise, the discussion will be focussed on Mr. Penner's subamendment.

Mr. Gerrard, how would you like to proceed?

Mr. Gerrard: I will pass on this one.

Mr. Chairperson: Thank you very much. A discussion Mr. Penner's subamendment—the next person I have on the list is Ms. Wowchuk. I hate to tease you like this, Rosann. There are copies of Mr. Penner's subamendment that are being photocopied for information of committee members.

Ms. Wowchuk: I just want to talk about a few things here, and talk about consistency and the kind of message that we got from people. Certainly, there were people that said, you know, they had outlined a variety of different ways that money could come to farmers. There was discussion on acreage payment.

As I look at the amendment to the main resolution, reflecting on what Mr. Penner said, and if I look at the resolution, it says: provide at least a further \$500 million. Nobody is saying that it is only \$500 million. It is saying at least \$500 million that would be provided.

The member talks about the variety of people that talked about the \$40 to \$60 an acre. From what I recall of the presentations—and certainly I do not recall AMM talking about numbers of \$40 to \$60 an acre. There were some presentations. I am not sure whether the resolution, you know, is reflecting on what everybody said, We talked earlier that the way to get strength to this motion, and support, was to call on other provinces to support.

On that, I would like to think back about the resolution that was passed by five provinces and the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, the Québec Farmers' Association, and in that resolution as well, they called for at least \$500 million for the federal government to put into it. The amount, if I am reading what you are saying in this amendment, the amendment is called for \$40 to \$60 an acre. That would mean somewhere in the range of \$500 million for Manitoba.

I think we have to be a little bit realistic in what we can expect from the federal government. I am looking at one of the notes here. I will read from UGG in their presentation to the committee. UGG believes that Prairie Provinces have a strong case for obtaining federal farm support far beyond what has been allocated to date. That said, we believe an additional \$500 million, as proposed in your resolution, is probably the most that might realistically be expected, given today's political climate at the federal level. Listening to some of that and listening to what producers said, and thinking where the federal government is in this situation—I am not sure that would be, I think, the amendments that are made thus far reflect what we heard at the committee, and that it is not restricted to \$500 million. It says reflecting based on the public consultation. The public consultation was AMM, was farm groups.

The member says: I listened to farmers, farm organizations, business leaders, municipal officials and have determined that \$40 to \$60 an acre is required immediately. In the main amendment that I brought forward, it says: The standing committee recommends, based on the public consultation, that the federal government

recognize federal support to farmers and provide at least another \$500 million.

It is not that we are saying only \$500 million. We are saying at least \$500 million. I think that what the member has said, that listening to farmers and farm organizations and businesses is reflected in the THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED. I think we have to think about some consistency in what we have said with other provinces and what the requests have been with other provinces as well. Although it is reflected we did hear this, I do not think it was representative of all the presenters.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Chairperson, I think we are getting close, and I hope we keep this spirit up of trying to get as much consensus as possible. I think that is the one thing I heard from all the presenters, both publicly here in the various committee hearings and also privately when I had a chance to talk to them. My concern on this is similar to the Minister of Agriculture's. Part of the problem you get into—and this is, I think, one of the things that a number of the presenters warned us against—is there were a lot of people who basically said: We have got a problem; we need a cash infusion. A lot of people really did not get into the nuts and bolts of it. I heard some pretty clear direction on the kind of programming. We heard much better things about GRIP than AIDA.

There were some specific circumstances, like southwest Manitoba, where other issues are involved. I heard a lot of talk about cost of production and input costs and, of course, anything we do we realize we have to be cognisant of trade laws and sanctions and the degree to which we can put anything forward. Certainly, I know whether we were looking at anything on the cost of production side, or on an acreage payment, you have to look at the impact it may or may not have on the export of agricultural products and agricultural-related products.

We are getting a little bit into the nuts and bolts here. When I look at this, I try to remember how many presenters we had and how many presenters really got into dollars and cents. Some did. Most were focussing on a loss per acre, but you know, I am trying to think back at how

many of the presenters actually came out with a specific amount per acre or even suggested an acreage payment. There were some, but there were a lot of people who talked about GRIP and other programs, coming up with something of that nature. The problem I have, for example, when I read this, if I was the federal minister here and I wanted to play devil's advocate and I was to get this, I would say: What do you mean \$40 to \$60 an acre? You are not sure?

I am not sure what the intent of the member is. Is he saying that some should get \$40 and some should get \$60; everyone should get a minimum of \$40; some should get up to \$60? The reason I am putting this forward again is this becomes the difficulty, I think, when you try and draft a program through a committee process. I do not want to give the federal government anything to shoot at. The bottom line is, Mr. Chairperson, we need to go on a fairly solid basis.

* (20:20)

Now the minister indicated, and I double-checked the resolution as well, because I wanted to make sure that we are all on the same wavelength here. The RESOLVED clause was pretty clear: at least another \$500 million in short-term support for grains and oilseed producers. When you look at it, once again, that covers what I think the intent is, but even here, again, it says a payment of \$40 to \$60 per acre. For whom? Is it strictly in grains and oilseeds? We mentioned farm crisis. We mentioned oil and grain seeds.

You have to be really careful. This resolution is going to be passed by the Legislature, and this is going to be where we are going to start the discussions with the federal government. We could spend quite some time trying to sort of work around this, but I think I understand what the intent is. If the member had reflected some of the losses per acre that are being reported, I think that might be in keeping with what I think he is trying to do here. As I said, it says \$40 to \$60 per acre. It does not say for whom, under what circumstances. You do not want to get into those kinds of details because they will pick us apart on this. To my

mind, we go in, we sit down with what we have here, the minimum of \$500 million. Most of the people who presented at the committee wanted us to know what the problem is, and, quite frankly, I do not think they expected us in this committee to come up with the immediate solution.

In fact, a lot of them threw it back to the minister and the Department of Agriculture to work on this particular kind of approach, so I hope we do not have to vote this down. If the member's intent was to reflect some of the losses that are out there that should be used as a base reference point, that, I think, would be reasonable. I am not sure if even the \$40 or \$60 figure would cover it. I heard some numbers that were lower, but some were higher, as well. If I was, once again, in the federal Department of Agriculture, I would sit down. So maximum loss of \$60 an acre, okay. What about people we heard who had significantly more, \$70, \$80?

I look at, for example, the southwest where, even looking at losses per acres this year, that is only half the problem. I mean not even half the problem. Most of the problem goes back to having that one year of virtually no crop. I just want to suggest that reflecting the need out there might be a better way of accomplishing what we are trying to get to here. I certainly would not support this amendment as it is, not so much the intent of it, but rather, if we are going to go in there and negotiate with the federal government, we had better make sure we are going from a position of strength and not give them anything to pick away at.

Right now, as I said, if I was creative and I was the Department of Agriculture analyst, I could probably give the federal minister about half a dozen questions here to ask our provincial counterpart. I am not sure she would have the answers because that is not what we heard from the committee. We heard there is a real problem out there. They said get a cash infusion. I heard a lot of people say the cash infusion itself is more important than numbers and formulas and the rest of it. It is getting support out there to producers, so I really would urge the member to either revise this a bit or change the intent around because, as it stands, I do not think it really supports our case.

Mr. Jack Penner: For clarification, Mr. Chairman, if the minister of highways would take a look at the second WHEREAS, he would note that the second WHEREAS says: Manitoba grains and oilseeds producers. So the resolution deals with grains and oilseed producers—clarification. Secondly, if you look at the RESOLVED, it is a WHEREAS, not a THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED. It is a WHEREAS identifying what we heard from farmers and businesspeople in Manitoba.

Thirdly, if we strike out the two words "has determined," if we could agree to that, then the resolution would read:

WHEREAS the Standing Committee on Agriculture, after listening to farmers, farm organizations, business leaders and municipal officials, that a payment of \$40 to \$60 an acre is required.

The reason, the variation between \$40 and \$60 was made by farmers. Being a farmer myself, you will note that using the distribution formula that has been in place, and still is in place, under both the CMAP program and similarly the new CFIP program now, and the AIDA program, has a variable of payments per acre or per crop. So the variation is there. That is why the people, the farmers making the presentations, have the variation within the request, because it will vary from crop to crop, acre to acre and farm to farm, based on what they raised and what they produced.

That is what the intent is here by the farm communities and farm leaders, because they understand how the programs work. Without rejigging or scrapping entire programs, in order to allow an immediate injection, an immediate cash flow, they are basically suggesting, by that intent, leave those processes in place, use that as the distribution mechanism, identify the amount of money required and get it out there. That is really what they said to us, and that is what this means.

I think if you look at that, Madam Minister, you will recognize that you have to, if you are looking at numbers, have a variation of those numbers. That is why it is there, the \$40 to \$60 an acre. That is really all it says, because there is

no clear set number. That is why the \$500 million can never be a clear set number either. That is why we agree with the wording in the THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that at least, a minimum, at least means to me a minimum of \$500 million, would be required and probably a lot more. Who knows?

If the costs were covered, or if the losses were attempted to become close to being covered, it would take substantially more than \$500 million. That is what this request is, and that is why it is contained in the WHEREAS, because that is a request. It is not a demand on. If it was a demand on, then it would be a THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED. So it identifies what we have heard during the course of hearings in the WHEREAS process.

Mr. Chairperson: Just before I move to our next speaker, I want to remind all committee members that comments, questions, please go through the Chair, as opposed to across the table. That is the normal practice of our committee.

Mr. Gerrard: Now having seen the written text of the subamendment, having heard some of the discussion and having listened through the presentations, I would like to suggest the following short change or subamendment to the subamendment, and that would replace the phrase "determined that a payment by, heard from many presenters the view that support," and then go on "of \$40 to \$60 an acre."

* (20:30)

Mr. Chairperson: Mr. Gerrard, could you just wait till we go through and see if your subamendment is in order? Thanks.

If I could have the committee come to order please. Mr. Gerrard has proposed a subamendment to a subamendment.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Chairperson: Can I have order? Thank you. Mr. Gerrard has proposed a subamendment to a subamendment, which would not be in order. I would ask that we deal with the original subamendment proposed by Mr. Penner and ask that Mr. Gerrard, at a later point in the meeting, once we have dealt with Mr. Penner's subamendment, maybe then we can consider the

amendment that you wanted to put forward. Is that acceptable?

Mr. Gerrard: I am not sure why it is not in order. Can I get a ruling?

Mr. Chairperson: It is just not proper procedure to have a subamendment amend another subamendment. Just to clarify, your amendment itself is not out of order; it is just that it is not the proper procedure for a subamendment to amend a subamendment.

Mr. Jack Penner: I wonder, just to clarify a matter, and if we would delete "has been determined," then it would read:

WHEREAS the Standing Committee on Agriculture, after listening to farmers, farm organizations, business leaders and municipal officials.

We just would need too—WHEREAS the Standing Committee on Agriculture, after listening to farmers, farm organizations, business leaders and municipal officials—

Mr. Chairperson: Mr. Ashton, on a point of order.

Point of Order

Mr. Ashton: Having a great respect for the rules and knowing that we could probably spend the next several hours going through procedural matters, I am wondering if committee members might be open to an adjournment. If there is some way of working out mutually acceptable wording, perhaps we can look at that in the next few minutes. If not, we can come back to where we are leaving off now.

I get the feeling that we are trying to get to some consensus. Maybe a five-minute adjournment might help?

Mr. Chairperson: Is it the will of the committee then to have a brief recess to work out the wording on this? *[Agreed]*

The committee recessed at 8:35 p.m.

The committee resumed at 8:45 p.m.

Mr. Chairperson: Will the committee please come back to order.

Committee Substitutions

Mr. Pitura: With leave of the committee, I would like to move that the honourable Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach) replace the honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) as a member of the Standing Committee on Agriculture, effective May 9. As per agreement made in the House, the House will be officially informed of the substitution in the official report of this committee.

Mr. Chairperson: It has been moved by Mr. Pitura that the Member for Russell replace the Member for Lac du Bonnet as a member of the Standing Committee on Agriculture, effective May 9. Is that agreeable to the committee? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Dewar: With leave of the committee, I would like to move that the honourable Member for Wellington (Mr. Santos) replace the honourable Member for The Maples (Mr. Aglugub) as a member of the Standing Committee on Agriculture, effective immediately. As per the agreement made in the House on April 19, 2001, the House will be officially informed of the substitution in the official records of this committee.

Mr. Chairperson: It has been moved by the Member for Selkirk that the Member for Wellington replace the Member for The Maples as a member of the Standing Committee on Agriculture, effective immediately. Is it agreeable to the committee? *[Agreed]*

* * *

Mr. Jack Penner: I wonder, Mr. Chairman, with the concurrence of the committee, if I might withdraw the subamendment that I had moved and then propose a different subamendment.

An Honourable Member: With leave.

Mr. Chairperson: Is it the will of the committee to allow Mr. Penner to withdraw his original subamendment? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Jack Penner: I would move then, Mr. Chairperson, seconded by the Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard),

WHEREAS the Standing Committee on Agriculture, after listening to farmers, farm organizations, business leaders and municipal officials, heard grains and oilseeds producers had losses of \$40 to \$60 an acre, and an immediate cash injection is needed.

Mr. Chairperson: For the information of the committee, Mr. Penner has moved

Following the fifth WHEREAS, a new one: WHEREAS the Standing Committee on Agriculture, after listening to farmers, farm organizations, business leaders and municipal officials, heard grains and oilseeds producers had losses of \$40 to \$60 an acre, and an immediate cash injection is needed.

The subamendment is in order.

Is the committee ready for the question?

The question before the committee is as follows:

WHEREAS the Standing Committee on Agriculture, after listening to farmers, farm organizations, business leaders and municipal officials, heard grains and oilseeds producers had losses of \$40 to \$60 an acre, and an immediate cash injection is needed.

Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the amendment?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Chairperson: The amendment is accordingly adopted.

We are now considering Ms. Wowchuk's amendment to the motion as amended.

* (20:50)

Mr. Gerrard: Now that we have dealt with Mr. Penner's subamendment, I want to make a few comments on the amendment and move a further subamendment. This subamendment would, I believe, reflect many of the concerns that producers presented, that were not reflected in the

amendment or the clause to date. I think that it is important that they be included. So I would recommend that they be added before the last three clauses in the amended resolution. The clauses would be as follows:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Province provide rebates for the education tax on farmland;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Province remove the provincial sales tax on farm inputs;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Province provide its share of the negative margin payments under AIDA;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Province of Manitoba and/or Crop Insurance provide compensation for farmers who seeded after the normal date for crop insurance coverage in 1999 because of the faulty advice provided at that time;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Province act immediately to implement the Rose report and that the Province then subsequently ask the federal government to provide its share of costs where applicable; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Province make changes to the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation to help young farmers along the lines of a proposal put forward by James Melnyk during the hearings of the Agriculture Committee.

Point of Order

Mr. Ashton: The subamendment is out of order. It calls for a number of financial expenditures. Even in Estimates, the committee which deals with expenditures, resolutions cannot add additional expenditures. This is not even in Estimates committee, where there is some ability to delete expenditures. The wording calls for additional expenditures, and that is out of order.

Mr. Chairperson: Just for the information of the committee, I would like to see the entire text of the subamendment proposed by the Member for River Heights. Has it been distributed?

An Honourable Member: No, no. We have not seen it.

Mr. Chairperson: Just for some information, could I ask Mr. Gerrard where exactly it was on Ms. Wowchuk's amendments that he would ask the committee to insert the amendments that he has put forward?

Mr. Gerrard: As I would read it, the most appropriate point would be before the last three new RESOLVED clauses at the end of the resolution. In other words, before the one that says: BE IT RESOLVED that the standing committee send the Hansard and Committee Report to the Honourable Jean Chrétien.

Mr. Chairperson: I must rule the amendments out of order based on *Beauchesne* 698.(7): "An amendment is out of order if it imposes a charge upon the Public Treasury, if it extends the objects and purposes, or relaxes the conditions and qualifications as expressed in the Royal Recommendation."

So those amendments are out of order, and we will go back to debating the amendment as proposed by Ms. Wowchuk.

Mr. Gerrard, on a point of order.

Point of Order

Mr. Gerrard: Let me challenge your ruling, but I would like clarification because what we are doing here is a series of recommendations coming from the committee. This is not like a bill before the Legislature. This is a series of recommendations coming from the committee. I think, in this circumstance, it is quite legitimate to make recommendations which reflect the input that we got from farmers, and that those recommendations reflect what we heard in terms of what was needed both at a provincial and a federal level.

Mr. Chairperson: Mr. Penner, on this point of order.

Mr. Jack Penner: On the same point of order then, just to help out, I think there are two ways that we could probably deal with this. One is to include these in the WHEREASES instead of a THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED. That would

not cause the expenditure—and would identify what had been requested clearly in the total document.

The second way to approach this—and I understand that this committee will have further deliberation on the long-term needs, as I think we had indicated there were. Part of the RESOLVED that we were dealing with in the formulation of the resolution that we were dealing with during committee was that there would be two approaches, a short term and a long term and that these might then be included in that long-term document or position paper.

I do not know whether that would help, but those are the only two ways that I would think that we might deal with it: either including them in the WHEREASes or setting them aside for future deliberation on the long-term policy proposal. *[interjection]* I think we should.

Mr. Chairperson: Mr. Ashton, on the same point of order?

Mr. Ashton: Just on a point of order procedurally. If the member has any problems with the ruling of the Chair, he can challenge the Chair, but it is not appropriate to question the Chair or engage in debate. I do not mean that as a criticism. I am just suggesting that the appropriate thing is if the member wants to challenge the Chair's ruling he can do so, and then we can move to a discussion about perhaps some of the suggestions that Mr. Penner has made.

Mr. Chairperson: I must rule that there is no point of order, that the amendments are not in order, and that the discussion will centre on the amendments put forward by the Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk), the amendments to the original motion.

* * *

* (21:00)

Mr. Gerrard: I challenge the Chair's ruling.

Voice Vote

Mr. Chairperson: Mr. Gerrard has challenged the ruling of the Chair. Mr. Chairperson, shall

the Chair's ruling be upheld? All those in favour of sustaining the ruling.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Mr. Chairperson: All those opposed to sustaining the ruling of the Chair.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Chairperson: In my opinion, the Yeas have it. The ruling of the Chair has been upheld.

* * *

Mr. Chairperson: We will return to the debate on Ms. Wowchuk's amendments.

Mr. Jack Penner: Mr. Chairman, I would like to propose one further amendment and that is with the final resolve which reads: THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Honourable Gary Doer, Premier of Manitoba, write to the Honourable Jean Chrétien, Prime Minister of Canada, requesting a meeting to discuss this important issue.

I would like to amend that or propose a subamendment to amend that motion and it would read thus:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Honourable Gary Doer, Premier of Manitoba, request an immediate meeting with the Prime Minister of Canada in order to address this need for a cash infusion and that the Premier's delegation to Ottawa should be comprised of farm, business, municipal leaders in order to fully convey the devastation facing Manitoba farmers and businesses and communities that rely on the agricultural sector.

Mr. Chairperson: If we could have some order, please.

It has been moved by Mr. Penner from Emerson

THAT in the final BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that after "Premier of Manitoba" the following be inserted: "request an immediate meeting with the Prime Minister of Canada in order to address this need for a cash infusion and that the Premier's delegation to Ottawa be

comprised of farm, business and municipal leaders in order to fully convey the devastation facing farmers and the businesses and communities that rely on the agricultural sector."

The motion is in order.

Mr. Ashton: The first thing, I think it is important to recognize here, is that the amendment we have before us originally, the amendment from the Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk), points specifically to the fact that we are encouraging the Premier to write a letter to the Prime Minister to request a meeting. I think that is something we have a consensus on, but I am not quite sure what this reference here to leading a delegation down to Ottawa is. The Prime Minister of Canada is going to be here in Winnipeg attending a fundraiser, I believe, a Liberal fundraiser. What better opportunity to meet with the Prime Minister of Canada if he is here in Winnipeg. I think the opportunities are tremendous.

I do not know if Mr. Penner is assuming that we will not get a meeting when we are here. I want to get back to the theme we have raised throughout this, part of the problem here is it is not that we have not had delegations go to Ottawa. We have. I was down there in January, when there were farmers and farm leaders from across the country who were in Ottawa, including a good-sized delegation from Manitoba. They made the rounds, and they did meet with various different ministers. They met with M.P.s, they met with people that were there, and there was some movement but not a heck of a lot of movement.

Now I mentioned this before at our first committee about the Minister of Disaster Assistance. I eventually got a meeting with the Minister of Disaster Assistance. There is one problem. He has not been to the southwest. He has not seen the situation there. He has not obviously had the opportunity of sitting through our committee hearings and hearing from people in the southwest, so I can tell you, sitting in an office in Centre Block in Ottawa does not get the point across. It really does not get the point across. Now it is part of the Canadian tradition maybe of going down to Ottawa at times, but you know, we know the Prime Minister is

coming. The Premier (Mr. Doer) has already indicated that he is going to ask for a meeting with the Prime Minister. Whether the Prime Minister will agree to that meeting and meeting with anyone else obviously will not be our decision. That will be the Prime Minister's decision. It might be wise for the Prime Minister to do that.

I note that our Premier, going back to the first committee hearing, sat through the entire committee hearing in Dauphin. Our Premier, even with the farm protest people, remained in the building and met with people, farmers who did it. So we are on good, solid ground here. I mean, as MLAs, we have done it and our Premier has done it. So I do not quite understand here where this delegation comes in if we have the Prime Minister here.

Now, I do not know if farmers are going to be able to attend this event, individuals. Perhaps there may be one member of the committee that might be able to get some tickets for members. Somehow I do not think some of us on the committee would be caught dead at that type of event. It is a partisan event and I am trying to be a little bit—*[interjection]* Could not afford it, says one of the members of the committee.

I really do not want to be disrespectful here, but the Prime Minister is here. I think our Premier has indicated that he would be more than happy to meet with the Prime Minister right here in Winnipeg, right here in the province of Manitoba. What more can I say? What better way to get the point across than to sit right here in Manitoba? I would even suggest, quite frankly, if the Prime Minister wanted to really see what was going on, and I realize there are not any sandbags to throw, there are no photo ops out of this one, this is real people.

* (21:10)

But I think we have heard from people in this committee. I think any one of the farm families who appeared before this committee would be more than happy to invite the Prime Minister out and show the situation they are in, open the books.

That again is going to be the Prime Minister's call, and I do not want to be

disrespectful here. I think we have proper ways of putting these things forward, but if our Premier can do it, I think the Prime Minister of Canada can do it, as well. I know the Prime Minister said on occasion that he does run into a lot of real people on the streets in various different locations. It is time to meet with some real farmers in western Canada.

I am just trying to picture here which is the best way to focus our energies. The Prime Minister is going to be here. Now this resolution talks about taking the delegation down to Ottawa. To my mind, that gets the Prime Minister off the hook right off the bat. Yes, sure we are polite and we have asked for a meeting, but we are not going to expect the Prime Minister to have a meeting here in Winnipeg on the farm crisis. It makes far more sense, to my mind, to leave the resolution the way it is.

If the member's intent was to add, he mentioned some wording about the cash infusion. I do not think that is a problem. I think that is what the intent is. We have a whole resolution that says cash infusion, so that part of the member's amendment may not be a problem. To talk about a delegation to Ottawa when we have the Prime Minister coming to Winnipeg, I think I would suggest to the member he might want to withdraw that part and if he thinks the wording needs to be changed somewhat, add a few words to make the point here. But I think the unanimous resolution of this committee should be to the Prime Minister: You are going to be in Manitoba, please, please meet with—certainly at a minimum—our Premier.

I will say this on the record as well, too, that I think it would be good if the Prime Minister did meet with farmers. You know, to be fair, I know the situation with the Innu in Labrador, a very tragic situation. I believe the Prime Minister did meet with people from that community. He has done that in the past. If he wants to show some real concern for western Canada, I could not think of a better place.

It does not have to be a media event. I am not suggesting that ought to be the case. I do not think this is about embarrassing anybody. I think this about getting the message across. I would feel a lot more comfortable if this resolution

stays exactly where it is or references, if we need to, that since the Prime Minister apparently is going to be in Winnipeg that we would respectfully urge him to meet at a minimum with our Premier and take the time while he is here to talk to people; some of the people the member referenced that are out there. I will tell you, more importantly than speaking to those of us who are in a leadership position, I would suggest talking to some real people out there. Talk to some of the real people we listened to and talked to in our committee hearings, and find out what is going on.

I know the intent of the member is not to I think necessarily deflect from that. He may not have been aware when he drafted this that we found out the Prime Minister is coming here. Let us focus all our energies on getting the Prime Minister while he is here in Manitoba to meet with the Premier and to meet with farmers, people who are going through this, the farm families who are in crisis.

Mr. Mervin Tweed (Turtle Mountain): Mr. Chairman, I cannot claim to have attended every meeting, or any, for that matter. I am here as a substitution, but I can tell you what people in my communities which have been affected are saying to me.

I know we argue about the words and the terminology and the expressions, recognizing that the Prime Minister may come to Manitoba and may speak to the Premier. I think that again what is being reflected in my part of the country and my communities that I represent is the fact that these were the same requests that were being made by their organizations and their associations. We could never get the movement of the Government of Manitoba out to our communities to show them the devastation that is out there. You can paint it any way you want with words in any way you want, but the fact of the matter is that we have to have a face-to-face meeting with the Premier of Manitoba and, I believe, some representatives of the organizations affected.

I commend the minister. To see the amendments that she has made I think is very positive. I think we are awfully close. I think the fact of

the matter is by asking that the Premier take this issue further, he stated today in the House, and we did take it off, and it is an absolute quote. He said: I would bring a delegation down to Ottawa to meet with the Prime Minister any day, any place, any time.

I think he is sending us a strong message that he is prepared to do that. I think that is the bottom line, if we can get that meeting. If it is here, I have no problem with it being in Winnipeg. But I am suggesting that if we want to change it in some way so that it identifies the two opportunities to meet face to face with the Prime Minister, then, yes.

My colleague has just suggested to me if we removed "to Ottawa" out of that amendment, I would hope that we might all be able to agree with it. It would just simply read: and that the Premier's delegation should be comprised off-farm in order to fully convey.

The bottom line is that we want the Premier to meet with the Prime Minister and raise this to the highest level we possibly can. I do not know what the formality is. I would look to people with more experience to offer me a suggestion. I think if we were to eliminate "to Ottawa" and leave it open, as long as we force the meeting between the two leaders, I think that is the bottom line. With that, that is my comment.

Mr. Chairperson: For the information of the committee, Mr. Tweed has asked that a change be made to the amendment put forward by Mr. Penner. It would need to be Mr. Penner that would put that, with leave of the committee, to have that suggestion come forward. Is there leave of the committee to delete the words "to Ottawa" from Mr. Penner's amendment.
[Agreed]

Mr. Pitura: I would like to begin by complimenting the minister and congratulating the minister on bringing back a resolution to the committee. I think that is very close to having a unanimous agreement. I am certainly hopeful that in the next short while that we will be able to bring about a unanimous agreement.

* (21:20)

I do want to echo the words of my colleague from Turtle Mountain with respect to the fact

that meeting with the Prime Minister and the Premier requesting the meeting with the Prime Minister is very important. I do not think the location is important, whether it happens in Winnipeg or Ottawa or any other place, for that matter.

So I think that removing the word "Ottawa" from the amendment is proper. I would, however, like to impart upon all members of this committee—and we had a chance to look at the Premier's (Mr. Doer) comments made in the House this afternoon. We looked at them very carefully, we listened to them very carefully, and the Premier did say in his answer to the Member for Emerson (Mr. Jack Penner): I would bring a delegation down to Ottawa to meet with the Prime Minister any day, any place, any time, if we can get that meeting with the Prime Minister. That was the "if," if we can get that meeting with the Prime Minister.

So the way the resolution reads right now is: If we can get a meeting with the Prime Minister, the Premier has indicated he would do it with a delegation. So I think that that part of the amendment to the resolution concurs with what the Premier indicated in the House this afternoon.

I will go on to finish what the Premier said because I think it has bearing on this whole thing. He said: Often we find when the Prime Minister says no more, absolutely no, he does not usually meet with you to tell you no a third time. Okay, so he is kind of indicating what the odds are: Having said that, we will try.

So that is a very firm commitment from the Premier to say we will try. When he says we will try and we will do it with a delegation, to me that means that he will try with a delegation to meet with the Prime Minister. We are aware he is coming to Winnipeg shortly, and we are aware we can go to Ottawa within two hours but I am not going to take 200 people down to Ottawa.

I will just pause a bit there, Mr. Chairman, because there was no intention on our side to indicate that there would be 200 people in a delegation. We were suggesting some key people, such as the president of Keystone Agricultural Producers, the president of the Association of Manitoba Municipalities, perhaps

Mr. Murray Downing and other identified groups that could have a representative there. So we are not looking at a large number of representatives to accompany the Premier.

I do want to point out, though, Mr. Chair, that having a number of farm producers there standing behind and shoulder to shoulder with the Premier, when the Premier meets with the Prime Minister, will give the Premier that support and strength that he needs to go eye to eye with the Prime Minister. To be able to say just exactly what our problem is here in Manitoba. I think he needs that kind of support, and those people that are there are going to be supporting him.

I will just finish off what the Premier said. He said: But I am not going to take 200 people down to Ottawa if there is no meeting already established with the Prime Minister, and we agree with that. You do not just take off and go to Ottawa and hope to meet with the Prime Minister. He says, "That would be a waste of taxpayers' money, Mr. Speaker," and he sits down.

So we looked at that very carefully, and that is why we brought the amendment that we did tonight on the basis of what the Premier had said in the House this afternoon, that he was willing to take a delegation to Ottawa if he could get a meeting with the Prime Minister. So we accept his word that he would. He said, having said that, you know, we will try. We will try. Even though the Prime Minister has said no, we will try. So I think that it behooves us to take this amendment and concur with this amendment, and I think then we have a finished product here I think that we can all move forward on. Thank you.

Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell): I certainly want to speak to this amendment because I believe—well, first of all, I want to thank the minister for listening. When we left the committee a couple of evenings ago, I think the minister felt that we all needed to step back, and she needed to take a little time to look at what was being proposed and also understandably to run it by Cabinet and caucus to ensure that, in fact, she was reflecting what the caucus wanted her to do, and trying to marry that with what was heard from the farmers in Manitoba.

Mr. Chair, I go back to when I was still a young lad, back in 1958. I recall a delegation of farmers to Ottawa .

Now, I was a pretty young lad at that time, but my father was a part of that delegation. Because he was a part of that delegation, again, it was a farm crisis situation where grain was at a very low price and had not moved. At that time, provincial leaders did accompany the farm delegation, and provincial leaders did establish meetings with the federal minister of agriculture and with the Prime Minister of the day.

In fact, it was that action that was taken by people right across western Canada that injected much-needed money into the agriculture economy. So, Mr. Chair, I see nothing wrong with the Premier (Mr. Doer) of this province, on behalf of producers of this province, taking the leadership of the producers with him to Ottawa.

Now, no one is suggesting, as Mr. Pitura had indicated, that we need to take 200 people. But, Mr. Chair, I believe that there is good reason to take the farm leaders, at least the presidents, and the heads of the farm organizations with the Premier. This shows that the Premier is being supported, not only by the Opposition party, but it is being supported by the producers themselves. He is standing up for the producers who are not asking for anything else but what they deserve. I believe that strengthening the THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED is a way in which our Premier can stand up proud on behalf of producers and on behalf of all people in Manitoba, and whether that meeting occurs in Ottawa or whether it occurs right here in Winnipeg is not relevant. As the Premier (Mr. Doer) said today in his remarks, I will meet any day, any place, any time.

So, if the Prime Minister is indeed coming to Winnipeg, and there is an agreement for him to meet with the Premier (Mr. Doer) here in Winnipeg, no one is going to object to that. The farm leaders, I know, will be here to support the Premier (Mr. Doer) in that meeting. Whether they are in the meeting at the time or whether they are just there to show support is the important thing, I believe.

There is no downside to this. I mean, the Prime Minister may not want to meet with the

Premier at the same time he is with farm leaders and with Opposition leaders and so forth at the same time he is meeting with the Premier. He may want to have a private conversation with the Premier, and we accept that. We understand that aspect of it.

I think you need to have the support of these farm producer organizations to show that indeed this is not just a request by government. This is a request by the people of Manitoba who are feeling the impact of this disastrous situation in Manitoba.

So, Mr. Chair, to the minister through you, I would urge her to strengthen her amendment by adopting what has been proposed by the Member for Emerson (Mr. Jack Penner). I think, then, we can go out of this committee unanimously supporting an amendment to the resolution which will be presented to the Legislature, and I think that we can show considerable strength on behalf of the people of this province by doing what is right. What is right here is to encompass in the resolution what we heard from producers and to reflect precisely what producers have told us to do. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Hon. Scott Smith (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): I believe, as we have gone over this, we can all reflect on what we have heard from the people that have presented to us over the last couple of months and as we form this committee over the last 10 days or so.

What we have all heard very, very strongly, and I think we would all agree, is that the folks out there are asking us, as a committee, to come up with a strategy to bring their message to the highest office in this country.

They are asking us to do that in a way that is going to be the most effective. Most people out there, who are busy on their farms, and people who are out there busy in their own businesses, are looking at this committee and saying: You have been in this process. You understand this process. We have given you the information. You understand the hurt that we have been through, and we want you to formulate and come up with a resolution together to reflect what we have told you.

* (21:30)

I think we are very, very close to doing that. I believe that we are very close in coming up with a solution through the political will of a lot of the experience that we have got around this table and in this Legislature, and coming up with a realistic way to represent in the most effective way the words that people in Manitoba and the producers and the farmers and the business leaders out there have asked us to do. As realists, as real as you can get in the political world, I think we realize that there are possibilities of asking for anything, and there is reality of what is doable.

The folks out there have presented, and we have the information. We have it in a resolution that the Premier (Mr. Doer) is going to be able to take forward that we are very close to agreeing on. The people out there are telling us time is of the essence. You know what? They would be on the field, not here tonight, if it was not for the wet weather that we have had in the last while. They are saying: We need to be out there. We need you to take a voice, and we need you to take that as far as you can to the upper level of the politics here in Canada.

Realistically, with this resolution, the First Minister of this province, taking this resolution with the information that we have combined jointly, as a joint committee, and putting that in the First Minister's hands, taking it to the highest level of this country and presenting that to him, is an option that is doable. Obviously, we have talked around this table. There is a possibility that here around this room, there could be a real possibility at the end of this month that the leader of this nation is going to be in this city. The possibility of our Premier sitting down at that time with what we have presented, or will present, is very realistic and possible.

We looked at the amendment that has been brought forward here, and what we heard was we wanted to be represented. That is what we heard from the people out there, the people at that mike that stood here and told us story after story after story. We want you to represent us. We want you to take our story, what we have told you, and represent us. Be leaders, and represent this and take it to the first leader of this country.

In this resolution, we heard some folks say we have the knowledge and it would be nice to go to Ottawa. Number one, we have to establish that meeting, we all know that. To ask for that meeting with a delegation is a possibility. To ask for that meeting from the Premier (Mr. Doer) of this province is a real possibility, and the Premier to take the representation that has been brought to us from the people out there is what they are asking and to do it in a timely fashion, not to try to establish a month down the road or six weeks down the road something to happen but something that would actually be real and doable.

To formulate a delegation and ask for a lot of farm leaders and a lot of business organizations and a lot of people to come off the land at this time is probably not a solution. It is probably a very, very busy time for the entire industry and the folks that are out there right now, to establish that as No. 1. It is probably unrealistic to try to take a lot of people that have felt the hurt and try to take them away from what they are struggling to do right now.

The possibility is to take the leadership that we present from this committee to the highest level of our Government, to our Premier of this province, and have him represent us. That, I think, is what the folks have been asking us to do, that is what people out there have been saying. We have given you the message. You have the message from us. We have given you our expertise. We have come from every walk and every corner of this province to provide you with that information. Now what are you going to do with it?

A few folks, as the member across the table mentioned, had suggested that they come along. We are the ones that have to make the decision on what is the best solution. Someone here just across the table had mentioned it is probably not doable if the Prime Minister of this country is going to meet with the entire delegation anyway, that he is just going to meet with the Premier. That is the reality, and the reality is if, in fact, that meeting could be established here in this province. It is a higher reality that the Prime Minister could bypass and not see the amount of people that we could put in a set area, at a set meeting, to meet with our Premier of this province. That is a doable solution. To establish the

meeting is No. 1, and we know it is going to be the Premier of this province sitting down and meeting at the highest level. That is the reality.

So to establish and try to take people that are busy, that have already given us the information, given us the expertise, given us a task to say we need to do this, we need to do this now and we need to get together on it and come up with a solution that is most effective and really will work. As politicians, you know the system, you know the way to do it and I believe that is what people are asking. I believe that to try to establish and try to put together and try to put one person or another person on a list, or take a person off the list is going to take time.

It is time that people are saying you have the information now, you have the expertise. I have heard over and over from people to say we do not want to come back anymore, we do not want to go to another committee. I heard members opposite say that over and over last night, that people have given us the information, people have supplied us with the ammunition, so to speak, that we need to put that into form for the Premier of this province, which was in this resolution, to meet and try to establish a meeting at the highest level in this country is what people are asking, not to try to establish a delegation and as some members and some folks have put it, to bang a tin cup on the inner perimeter of Ottawa is not what we saw reflected around this table. What they said was take it and do it in the most effective way. The most effective way is the Premier of this province taking the information that we have jointly put together which is fine information, excellent, well-documented information and taking that to the highest level in this country. That is what the people asked us to do.

So, Mr. Chair, with those comments, thank you.

Mr. Chairperson: I have Mr. Gerrard on this list next.

Mr. Gerrard: Just briefly, Mr. Chairman, with the words to Ottawa removed, I think that it is quite feasible to have a delegation accompanying the Premier including the members of the committee, the farm leaders, the municipal leaders. Whether it is here or whether it is in

Ottawa, I think that the amendment is a good one and should be included.

Mr. Larry Maguire (Arthur-Virden): Just having got here, this motion has been amended and notwithstanding what the Member for Brandon West (Mr. Smith) has just said and he is correct, people are busy in the fields at this time of year. There are issues there but as the Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) has just indicated, if the meeting can be confirmed, that it is on the ground here in Manitoba or somewhere close, and our Premier, in his comments today, is willing to lead that delegation we will back him on that delegation or I certainly will. I have heard my colleagues say the same.

Having been a farm leader and been busy in the field many times, it is your responsibility, however, as a farm leader to leave the field once in a while and represent the people that you are there to represent. They have elected you as the Chairman of your organization to do that, and I think it would be incumbent upon us to at least leave them the option of deciding whether or not they are too busy to come. I think it would be still a good and respectable opportunity to at least provide them the opportunity to come as farm leaders.

Some of the business leaders, some businesspeople, have expressed an interest in coming as well. I do not know what sectors, but I know that there are some in the farm input side as well, probably in the financial services, perhaps, that might be interested in sitting in on a meeting and, no doubt, would have a lot of expertise to be able to bring to the table, to help the Prime Minister and the Premier in such a meeting come to some kind of an agreement. Municipal leaders, particularly in this case, when we know the president, Mr. Motheral, I am sure that he would not mind being a part of this small delegation. Certainly, where the number 200 came up there a while ago, and I do not where that came from, because I do not think anybody on this side certainly wanted that. I know nobody on the Government side is going to look at taking 200 people in an organization to all go to a meeting, and, of course, now it is not in Ottawa, but even here.

* (21:40)

I think that you have got a situation where these leaders would take the time. This is a most serious situation. They have come and expressed that at this very table and three other tables around the province as we heard their presentations and took time to go out to the country and hear them. I think we are doing an injustice to not provide an opportunity for them to be a part of this committee if in fact we are granted a meeting with the Prime Minister. So I would thank you for that, Mr. Chairman, and I would urge the committee to consider this amendment.

I guess, while I am at it, and there seems to be a little bit of discussion going on, I would like to talk to the second THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Standing Committee on Agriculture, having heard a number of suggestions for value-added, and we certainly did, processing, that we do not limit it to such as, and I do not think this was the intent of the minister, additional ethanol production and a new variety of sugar beet, recommended that the federal-provincial governments pursue these opportunities for rural communities. I guess it could be read as being specific to those, and I would wish that it be expanded into any kind of—*[interjection]*—such as, particularly, yes, I agree with that.

I am only outlining that I would certainly not want to limit that. I do not think it was the members on the Government's side or the ministers as I have indicated. I would just like to be on the record to say that there are a number of opportunities out there today in our value-added community or in our agriculture community for value-added opportunities. I actually think that this is one of the most important parts of the resolution that we are speaking to today because, if we are going to continue to be producers of raw commodities in this province, then we very well will need some kind of infrastructure development in this industry.

I am not sure with the—I should not say I am not sure. I am very sure that, in a number of instances, individuals who are farming today do not have the capital requirements to carry on with their farming operation as well as take funds from the present operation and invest it in

another sector further up the food chain of value-added.

I think that there is a role to play in making sure that government sets the table for those kinds of developments to take place and actually works with, whether it is investment organizations or expanding the use of new generation co-operatives as we have legislation now in that area.

I think it is incumbent upon us to look at it as a government in this province and try to enhance value-added processing, wherever we can, of all commodities, including the livestock operations that we have because, if we expand them far enough, we will eventually be able to perhaps cut down that freight between here and the High River, Alberta and Brooks, and particularly in the cattle feeding industry as well. Whether we continue to look in the area of bison and elk and further processing there at this time, as you well know, Mr. Chairman, it is being done in North Dakota in the bison industry, the majority of it. There may be opportunities for some of our entrepreneurs in this province to do that as well at some time in the future.

So my only comment there is to hope that we would not limit any kinds of opportunities in that area. Once again, I reiterate that I would seek all members of this committee's support for the amendment, however, on the last THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that has been put before you.

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, we have had a lot of discussion and a lot of co-operation this evening, and certainly we have had discussion in the House about the—

Mr. Chairperson: Mr. Penner, on a point of order.

Point of Order

Mr. Jack Penner: I just wonder whether we are going according to your list there, as far as allowing who to speak. I am just wondering whether the minister intends to move a motion at this time because I would certainly like to speak before she moves a motion. I asked very early on, I indicated that wanted to speak. I did not hear the minister at that time approach the Chair to speak.

Mr. Chairperson: I have to rule that is not a point of order. I have been keeping the list. The list has been put together for quite a number of minutes as Mr. Maguire was speaking. Ms. Wowchuk is on the list to speak now, followed by Mr. Penner.

* * *

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, I was just beginning my comments and indicating that our Premier (Mr. Doer) did discuss this matter in the House, and there is some discussion on the wording of the amendment.

I wonder if we might be able to again take a five-minute break to work through this amendment and perhaps come to a resolution on it.

Mr. Jack Penner: Before we break for the amendment, I would like to make a few comments, if that is allowed, before we break to have a further private discussion.

Mr. Chairperson: We had a request for a recess. Is it the will of the committee to allow Mr. Penner to speak before we have that recess? On the subamendment. *[Agreed]*

Mr. Jack Penner: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. We have listened long and hard to people all across Manitoba.

We have listened very carefully to what they said. I believe this subamendment that they are dealing with now is as reflective and reflects as closely as can be the will of the people that spoke to the committee.

The subamendment really reads this way. It says: THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Manitoba's Standing Committee on Agriculture recommend to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba that the Premier request—very simple statement, really—the Premier asks for an immediate meeting, or requests an immediate meeting with the Prime Minister of Canada in order to address this need for a cash infusion. That is what our whole resolution talks about, an immediate cash infusion—and that the Premier's delegation should be comprised of farm, business, and municipal leaders—and here is the

crux of the argument—in order to fully convey the devastation facing farmers and businesses, and the devastation caused to communities, total communities, that rely on the agriculture sector. I think this is an excellently worded resolution and covers the whole gamut.

Then I read to you what our Premier (Mr. Doer) said in the House today, reflecting exactly that resolution. I will read this to all of you. This is your leader, your Premier, our Premier. He said: "I would bring a delegation down to Ottawa to meet with the Prime Minister any day, any place, any time, if we can get that meeting with the Prime Minister."

We, ladies and gentlemen, have removed the Ottawa designation from our request, because we really do not care, Madam Minister and Mr. Chairperson, where this meeting occurs, whether it occurs in Halbstadt, Manitoba, or in Winkler or in Dauphin or in Timbuktu, as long as the meeting between the Prime Minister, the Premier and the delegation of rural Manitobans occurs, that these rural Manitobans can directly convey the devastation, the hurt, the pain and the suffering caused to whole families because of our Government's non-recognition of the need to support their agricultural community to the same level that the Americans do and that the Europeans do and that now South America is moving towards and the rest of the world is.

* (21:50)

They have determined without question that half of their income will be derived from the marketplace and the other half of the income will be derived directly from government taxation. We can no longer afford, our farm communities can no longer afford, to be required or asked to produce at half the income level that other countries allow their farmers for income levels. That is unfair, that is inhumane to think that our producers could ever hope to in a world economy produce for half the cost that other countries produce for.

All we are saying is your Premier has clearly said, yes, I will do this, and we are saying that all we are asking for is not 200 people, as the Premier indicated in the House today, and I think quite frankly, Mr. Chairperson, he was being a

bit mischievous and playing a bit to the media, sort of, I think, identifying a huge cost to the Province that would be incurred. Let me assure the minister and the Chairman of this committee, and, indeed, all members of the committee, that if I went out to the farm community and asked them to pick up their own bills to go to Ottawa, I think they would say, yes, we will go. It would be no cost to government or the taxpayers. It would not be 200 people asking for a ride to Ottawa. That is not the reason we are going to Ottawa. That is not the reason we are requesting a meeting with the Prime Minister. These people are busy people. They want to get on with their lives, and they want to put in a crop so that food can be produced for another year. That is what this is all about. I think we should not forget the importance of the primary food producer that has far, far too long been required to subsidize the consumer and many others, including people in other nations, through the export of their commodities at half the cost of what it should really be.

I ask for a sympathetic hearing and a sympathetic ear from members opposite to recognize that their Premier (Mr. Doer) already knew what he was saying in the House this afternoon, that he pre-empted the members opposite, his own caucus members, he pre-empted them in promising exactly what we are requesting. He made the commitment today to all Manitobans through the conveyance of the message in the Legislature. Indeed, there is no higher honour bestowed in this province than on the Premier of the province, and the people of Manitoba respected him for it.

So we are saying to the committee today that the subamendment that we have put forward is indeed a good subamendment reflecting exactly what had been requested by the farm community, the municipal leaders, the business leaders from all across this province. All we are asking is that the Premier request an immediate meeting with the Prime Minister to convey the devastation that is going on daily and the pain and suffering that our children and whole families are incurring. So give it some serious thought. Hopefully, you can support the subamendment.

* (22:00)

Mr. Chairperson: Is it the will of the committee to break for a recess, as we had discussed previous to Mr. Penner's statement?

Ms. Wowchuk: Just one moment, Mr. Chairman, before we go on this break, I think the member has just put on a real performance here about how committed he is and talking about the Premier (Mr. Doer). The Premier is very committed to agriculture. I would remind the member that it was our Premier that led a delegation as soon as we were elected. We led a delegation. Our Premier got a meeting with the Prime Minister, with Mr. Romanow, and we have supported agriculture.

Our Premier has said he will do it again, and the THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we have put forward says: BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Honourable Gary Doer, Premier of Manitoba, write to the Honourable Jean Chrétien, Prime Minister of Canada, requesting a meeting to discuss this important issue. It can be an immediate meeting. But for the member to say that we are not listening to what the people are saying and that his amendment is so much better and put on a big performance here, I think that if you want to work together, we have been working together as a committee. So let us take a bit of time to discuss this and not bother with these kind of rants.

Mr. Chairperson: Is it the will of the committee to take a short recess? *[Agreed]*

The committee recessed at 9:08 p.m.

The committee resumed at 9:14 p.m.

Mr. Chairperson: Will the committee come to order. What we are discussing is Mr. Penner's subamendment to the original amendments put forward in this meeting by the minister. I have nobody on the list.

Mr. Jack Penner: Mr. Chairman, the minister has put before us a draft for a substitution of the resolution that we had put forward or the subamendment that we had put forward which we think is an excellent one because it is all-inclusive. We would like the minister to clarify for us the intent of her resolution or her proposal

for a resolution or a subamendment. Could you clarify the meaning of the draft of a proposal that you have put before us?

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, as you know, we put forward a proposed THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Honourable Gary Doer, Premier of Manitoba, write to the Honourable Jean Chrétien, Prime Minister of Canada, requesting a meeting to discuss this important issue, the important issue being what has been outlined in the motion.

The member put forward an amendment to that. We have looked at it and we have made some changes to it to reflect what we feel is strengthening the issue. That is that the Premier will request an immediate meeting with the Prime Minister of Canada in order to discuss an immediate cash infusion and long-term solutions to the farm income crisis, and that the committee encourage the Prime Minister to meet with the delegation led by the Premier, made up of farms, businesses, and municipal leaders, in order to fully reflect the devastation facing families, businesses and communities.

This resolution requests that the Premier write a letter, and that the committee write a letter as well, asking the Prime Minister to meet with the delegation.

* (22:20)

Mr. Jack Penner: That is our perception of what the intent by the minister is here, and we think that is unfortunate because basically what the resolution now says, that only the Premier will meet with the Prime Minister to discuss the immediate cash infusion and long-term solution to the farm income crisis, and that this committee then, this committee, would write, or phone, or whatever, approach the Prime Minister's office for a meeting with the Prime Minister led by the Premier of Manitoba. I think that is unfortunate.

I think it is unfortunate that the minister is trying to dissect the approach that farmers, business leaders and municipal leaders across this province have requested. I think it is unfortunate that the minister is suggesting now that the Premier meet by himself—

Point of Order

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, the member is misunderstanding. There is nothing here that is weakening the position. If he would read carefully, it says that the Premier request the meeting with the Prime Minister, and that the committee encourage the Prime Minister to meet with a delegation led by the Premier. It is strengthening the position. There will be a request from the Premier, and there will be a request from this committee to also have the Prime Minister meet with a delegation led by the Premier. For clarification.

Mr. Chairperson: Mr. Penner, on the same point of order.

Mr. Jack Penner: Well, again, I think the minister must think we are not very observant. Maybe it is late, but surely this says: BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Manitoba Standing Committee on Agriculture recommend to the Legislature that the Premier request an immediate meeting with the Prime Minister of Canada in order to discuss an immediate cash infusion and long-term solution to the farm income crisis.

Then you go on and say: And that this committee encourage the Prime Minister to meet with the delegation led by the Premier made up of farm, business and municipal leaders in order to fully reflect the devastation facing farmers and the business community.

I think, Madam Minister, that if that is your wish, I mean you have a majority on the committee, you can vote this in, if you really chose to, but we would be hard pressed to support this kind of a move to dissect—

Mr. Chairperson: Can I remind the—

Mr. Jack Penner: —this approach. We have put forward—

Mr. Chairperson: Order.

Can I remind the committee, we are discussing the point of order. We are not debating any resolutions. A point of order is simply on procedure of this committee.

The Member for Russell, on the same point of order.

Mr. Derkach: On the same point of order, Mr. Chair, just to the draft amendment, I guess, that is being put forward by the minister. I think, if you read through that draft amendment, if we want to be consistent, we are asking this committee to recommend that the Premier request an immediate meeting and also to be consistent with what the BE IT RESOLVED is doing, we should also be recommending that the Premier encourage the Prime Minister to meet with the delegation led by the Premier.

Mr. Chairperson: On the point of order, I must rule that the minister does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

* * *

Mr. Chairperson: I want to remind the committee that we are focussing right now on the amendment put forward by the Member for Emerson (Mr. Jack Penner). I want to suggest to the committee that we need to deal with this amendment. Either there is an agreement to withdraw the amendment, or we need to, at some point, deal with this amendment.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Chairperson, I think the suggestion made by the Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach), we will probably find some common ground there. To Mr. Penner, there was no intent to water anything down. I have already seen what the Premier (Mr. Doer) said. The intent in this particular case was that in addition to whatever correspondence takes place from the Premier to the Prime Minister that we also have the committee encouraged, not just the Premier. I mean we can do that everyday in the Legislature, and that happened today, but we should encourage the Prime Minister as well to meet with, not only the Premier, but the Premier and a delegation, which is what the member and other people had suggested.

I would agree with the recommendation from the Member for Russell. I think that would be quite agreeable to us. I believe he had suggested taking out this committee and putting in the Premier, encouraging him.

Mr. Jack Penner: Let me ask, then, for further clarification. Does this say that, in your view, Madam Minister, the Legislative Assembly would encourage the Premier to meet, first of all, with the Prime Minister when he comes to Manitoba? Is that what that first part says? I just want clarification before we agree to changing anything.

Mr. Chairperson: Order. We do not have a motion on the floor. Procedurally, we need to have the motion forward to be dealing with the amendment that the Member for Emerson has put forward. I would suggest we either take that motion off the floor or we deal with it in some form. I want to make sure we follow the correct procedure at this committee.

Mr. Ashton: If it would help, I was going to suggest that Mr. Penner withdraw his motion, for now. I mean he can re-introduce it after by leave. We can then read in the amendment, the change that Mr. Derkach had suggested, which I think is our intent, if we can deal with that. I can just assure the member, if he reads it, it will say exactly what I think we are all talking about here. That is that the Premier request a meeting with the Prime Minister dealing with an immediate cash infusion, which was there. Also we have added long-term solutions because that was, I think, what people had asked for. So that is a change from the original proposal. In this case, the Premier encourage the Prime Minister to meet with a delegation led by the Premier. This is what the Premier said; it is what members opposite said. It lists the specific wording of the delegation that Mr. Penner had put in place, all the wording basically, fairly similar.

I think that was the general intent. If it is acceptable in procedure, that might be a way to deal with it, if the member wishes to withdraw his resolution. Once again, we can always go back to that resolution if this is not satisfactory, but it will allow us to put it on the floor and then discuss the intent.

Mr. Chairperson: I just want to clarify, I was not asking the Member for Emerson (Mr. Jack Penner) to withdraw his motion. I was simply clarifying that if we are going to be discussing a motion the one before us is the amendment the Member for Emerson put forward. I would ask

that members tailor their comments to the amendment put forward by the Member for Emerson.

Mr. Jack Penner: If in fact there is no change, then why would we want to withdraw the motion that I put forward? If the intent and meaning and everything is exactly the same, then why do we not leave it the way it is and deal with it?

The other thing is I would like a clarification from the minister before I would consent to withdraw or change anything. I would like to know her intent. That is all we are asking for. Just give us the intent of what the minister means here. If we need to shut the committee down again for five minutes so she can explain it to us without putting it on the record, I think we have enough consensus around the table and commonality and common approaches that we can discuss this and ask for clarification on what the intent of the minister is. Therefore, I ask the minister what her intent here is.

When I read the BE IT RESOLVED that the Manitoba Standing Committee on Agriculture recommended to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba that the Premier request an immediate meeting with the Prime Minister of Canada in order to discuss an immediate, cash infusion and long-term solution to the farm income crisis, and then, even if we would change that, at that meeting I would then suggest you are saying at that meeting, he would then request of the Prime Minister of Canada that there be another meeting called, which he would lead a delegation to—it is not? Well, then, why must we change anything, because that is exactly what my resolution said.

* (22:30)

My resolution says that we request an immediate meeting with the Prime Minister of Canada in order to address this need for a cash infusion, and we had removed "to Ottawa," that the Premier's delegation should be comprised of farm, business, municipal leaders in order to fully convey the devastation facing farmers and the businesses and communities that rely on the agricultural sector. If in fact what you are saying is that it is identical, then why are we changing any wording, because the clarity is there?

Mr. Ashton: It would be my intent to move the substituted subamendment. First of all, the member's original subamendment did not include any reference to long-term solutions. That is added. If the member will check, his original resolution jumps from requesting an immediate meeting with the Prime Minister, that is maintained in this resolution, and then says that the Premier's delegation should be comprised of.

The bottom line here is that we are making it clear that we are encouraging the Premier, not only to have a call for an immediate meeting with the Prime Minister, but to also call for a meeting with a delegation as well. The reality is you can ask for a thousand and one meetings with the Prime Minister, and he will turn around and say, I will meet with you as Premier.

In this case, we are making explicit in here that we are not assuming that you can take a delegation. It does not work that way. If the Prime Minister refuses to meet with the Premier and a delegation, he can refuse to meet with the Premier and a delegation.

What this says is it makes it very clear that we are asking not only for a meeting with the Prime Minister, not just between the Prime Minister and the Premier, we are also going to make it clear we want to meet with the delegation as well. It is not the same as what the member said. This is wording here. The member jumps from requesting a meeting, and then says and the Premier's delegation will include. It really does not work that way. The only way you are going to have a delegation going there is if the Prime Minister agrees to a meeting with a delegation. So that is what we are suggesting.

Mr. Derkach's suggestion—we actually thought it would be appropriate for the committee to suggest that. He had suggested, no, the intent was that this was going through the Premier, and the Premier is already going to be requesting a meeting.

So here the Premier had requested a meeting, not just with the Prime Minister, like a private meeting, but also encouraging in this case the Prime Minister to meet with the Premier and a delegation. We even put in about the

Premier leading the delegation. So this is, I think, refined wording. It fits in with some of the protocol that does exist. I am not a big fan of protocol here, but I know what it is like.

I have tried to arrange meetings with members—I do not think there is anybody in this committee right now—but members when they were in government. That is the normal way you do it. The same thing now. I know the Member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Maguire), there have been various meetings that have been set up. Normally, what you do is you sit down with the minister and you say, I would like to set up a meeting. I would like to meet with you and I would like the delegation to come. If the Member for Arthur-Virden set up a meeting and all of a sudden there is 30 extra people there, that is not the way things work.

I really want to see a meeting with the Prime Minister. Rather than play games back and forth, I think the best thing is a meeting with the Prime Minister. The best possible case beyond that is that it is a meeting with not only the Premier, but also a delegation. Let us leave a little bit of leeway here so we are not jamming the way these things really work. We all know the way it works around here. That is really the intent. I think Mr. Penner is looking for intent here that is not there. It is different on the long term, so it is substantially different. We have brought in about three or four different amendments from our original wording, all of which were suggested by members opposite, including Mr. Derkach's final suggestion, which changes some of our intent, but moves it back. I think we are getting close here. We just need a little bit more trust, a little bit more work, and I think this does it.

Mr. Maguire: I understand a little clearer the intent, I think, of the minister on this, and I am just wondering if there was not some wording that we could not still work with just to clarify that. I would offer that, perhaps if that is the intent, the Premier (Mr. Doer) and the delegation meet with the Prime Minister at the same meeting, if possible, that we could kind of work with this and say that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, that the Premier request an immediate meeting of the committee/delegation with the Prime Minister of Canada in order to discuss an immediate cash infusion and, at the

same meeting, the Premier, instead of this committee, as the minister of highways has indicated, encourage the Prime Minister to meet with the delegation. That little bit of an addition of the committee meeting—do you want me to write it in on your sheet?*[interjection]*

I would put it in here, Steve, and just offer that, I guess. I just offer that as a little more clarity and maybe a little more comfort to our side that the delegation is going to get every attempt, at least, to meet. I know the Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk) has indicated that it is her intent that the Premier try to get a meeting including the committee. As the minister of highways knows, as he has indicated, there is some protocol, but, as I mentioned in my comments about an hour ago, I think when we were talking, it is not a big delegation.

I think it is a delegation that could help the Premier, and I think that is the only offering, sort of why we are insisting as much as we can that some of the farm business and municipal leaders be there, because they have also requested meetings with the Prime Minister. Some of them were before us and reiterated that. Some of them have done it individually, and I think it would be incumbent to let the Prime Minister know that it would be Manitoba's preference that there be a few members of a small delegation, along with some of the committee members here, to meet with the Prime Minister on this important issue.

If, in fact, the Premier is correct today that the Prime Minister is coming to Manitoba later this month, that might be one thing, but I think the Minister of Agriculture knows, and has already made the recommendation that this kind of a request should go immediately. The members opposite have indicated that. The request should go immediately. We know that we may not get a meeting tomorrow. The Prime Minister has an agenda and a schedule as well as anybody here, and it is probably as full or more full than any of ours. I think we need to be cognizant of that, but I think that the request, if we can agree upon this tonight, should go post haste tomorrow morning to the Prime Minister and the committee to say to the Prime Minister that our Premier is willing and we have an all-party delegation that is willing to back our

Premier in meeting with the Prime Minister as quickly as we possibly can.

Ms. Wowchuk: You know, I have listened to all of this that people are looking for assurances, that the delegation is going to be included, that the Premier is not going to meet alone with the Prime Minister. Let us listen to what the Premier said today. He said: I will bring a delegation down to Ottawa to meet with the Prime Minister any day, any time, any place, if we can get a meeting with the Prime Minister. Often we find that the Prime Minister may say no more, absolutely no. He does not usually meet with you or tell you no a third time. He said we are aware. He has talked about that we are aware that the Prime Minister is going to be in Manitoba, but he is not interested in taking a large delegation to a meeting if the Prime Minister is not willing to meet. I am just going from that.

We have got the commitment from the Premier (Mr. Doer). I do not know why people are trying to draft THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that is going to spell out everything that the Premier is going to do. You have said that you support what the Premier is doing, you are willing to support him. He said he is going to take the leadership and call the Prime Minister for a meeting.

* (22:40)

Why is it that we have to try to spell everything out in this THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED? He said he is going to try and get a meeting with the Prime Minister. He wants a delegation to go, that if there is a meeting, a delegation will go to the meeting. We have worked it out. We have got an amendment, a suggestion here of a resolution where the Premier will request an immediate meeting with the Prime Minister. The Premier will encourage the Prime Minister to meet with the delegation led by the Prime Minister. The resolution says what the Premier has said in the House he was going to do.

So I am not sure why we are trying to work out such detail in this THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED. It is almost tempting to go back to the first THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Honourable Gary Doer, Premier of

Manitoba, wrote to the Honourable Jean Chrétien, Prime Minister of Canada, requesting a meeting to discuss this important issue. It is all covered off there. I do not know why we are trying to put such detail into this THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED. We have a Premier who is willing and interested in leading a delegation, in meeting with the Prime Minister. He did it before, and he will do it again.

So I am not sure why we are spending all of this time trying to figure out all the details on what it is we want the Premier to do. He has put his word on the record. He will meet the Prime Minister or set up a meeting with the Prime Minister if it is possible. We hope it is here in Winnipeg, and if the Prime Minister comes there will be a delegation.

So why all this spelling out the detail of how it is going to be? His word is on the record.

Mr. Chairperson: Before we move on, I want to remind all committee members that comments, questions, go through the Chair to each other across the table. So could you please put your questions through me as the Chair.

Mr. Jack Penner: It is quite clear in my view that either the Premier has already approached the Prime Minister for a meeting when he comes to Manitoba or that might even be protocol, and that the Premier wants the leeway to ask the Prime Minister at that meeting whether he would be willing to meet with a delegation. That seems to be the intent of the—*[interjection]* That is not the intent of the—*[interjection]* Well, then I would suggest that we proceed with the amendment that I put forward because that is exactly what that says. If that is the intent, then the intent is clear and the resolution stands clear.

Mr. Maguire: I would agree. I think that the resolution that is before us is inclusive of getting a meeting with the Prime Minister and the delegation would be there. There seems to be some ambiguity about the resolution that we do not have before us yet, that we are talking about, in that area. I think that all that we are trying to do is come to a consensus.

The minister is on record as having clarified this somewhat, and really if through that

clarification as I read it, it is basically, the two of them—this is the same. The resolution that we have before us asks for a meeting with the Prime Minister, and there is going to be a delegation there at the same meeting, as much as we possibly can.

I think the Premier indicated that today in the House, that he is willing to meet with the Prime Minister. As far as I am concerned, that is one of the options that we could look at. I know that is the resolution that is before us. The one that the minister has wondered about here, I guess when I read it the first time I had the same concern as the member from Emerson, but I just thought, well, we could have an all-party consensus on this.

Certainly, the minister has clarified that it is her intent and the minister of highways has indicated, I believe, that it is his intent, as they understand the resolution that has been put forward, that the Premier would ask that the delegation also meet with the Prime Minister at the first meeting, and if that is the case, then we are getting very close.

Mr. Ashton: I am a bit disappointed that Mr. Penner seems to be looking for all sorts of interpretations or motives in this. The motion is before the floor, and the member has not withdrawn it, so I would suggest we discuss it and vote on it, and we can look at that or other alternatives. We did add in long-term solutions. That was not included in the original resolution. It is more to do with drafting, because the way it reads here is that basically the Premier asked for a meeting and the delegation included.

What we have said is that in this particular case we have spelled out that there should be a call for the Prime Minister to meet with the delegation led by the Premier. I want to mention again, if you want to ask for a meeting to take a delegation along, you usually say that. I mean, I have always done that as an MLA, and most people have done that here. Actually, I have never had a meeting with an MLA in the last year and a half as a minister where if the MLA wants to bring people along, you know, they tell you up front. So that is what it spells out. It is much clearer wording than the protocol that is there.

The request for a meeting with the Prime Minister in this particular case, I mean, the Premier has already said on the record, and that would go out. I would assume the letter to the Prime Minister would reflect what the Premier said in there, that he is requesting a meeting with the Prime Minister and that he would like to have a delegation of people there. As I said, in this case you do not ask for a meeting and then bring a whole delegation along, unless it is understood right up front as a meeting with a delegation.

So what I would suggest if there is not consensus on this proposal, let us vote on this. If it is defeated, we will move to either that or the original motion because actually I looked at the original motion and it does not look all that bad after spending the last hour on trying to perfect another amendment because it does say: "BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Honourable Gary Doer, Premier of Manitoba, write to the Honourable Jean Chrétien, the Prime Minister of Canada, requesting a meeting to discuss this important issue." I think we are getting into how many angels can fit on the head of a pin here a little bit.

So I would suggest maybe we vote on the member's proposal, and I am actually thinking, I am debating whether we even propose this one afterwards, maybe I want to get back to the original. The original looks pretty good after an hour's worth of moving nowhere.

Mr. Chairperson: Is the committee ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Chairperson: The question has been called. The question before the committee is as follows: Inserted into the last BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED after the words "Premier of Manitoba" insert "request an immediate meeting with the Prime Minister of Canada in order to address this need for a cash infusion and that the Premier's delegation should be comprised of farm, business and municipal leaders in order to fully convey the devastation facing farmers and the businesses and communities that they rely on, the agricultural sector."

Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the amendment?

Voice Vote

Mr. Chairperson: All those in favour of adopting the amendment, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Mr. Chairperson: All those opposed, say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Chairperson: In my opinion, the Nays have it.

The amendment is accordingly defeated.

* * *

Mr. Chairperson: Our discussion now is back on the original amendment put forward by the Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk).

Mr. Ashton: I am almost afraid to do this, Mr. Chairperson, but I move that the BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED be amended to read: BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Manitoba's Standing Committee on Agriculture recommend to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba that the Premier request an immediate meeting with the Prime Minister of Canada, in order to discuss an immediate cash infusion and long-term solutions to the farm income crisis, and that this committee encourage the Prime Minister to meet with a delegation led by the Premier of Manitoba, made up of farm, business and municipal leaders, in order to fully reflect the devastation facing farmers, businesses and communities.

* (22:50)

Mr. Chairperson: For clarification, I would ask the Member for Thompson to indicate again where this would fit in. It would replace the last BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED.

It has been moved by the Member for Thompson that the following replace the last THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Manitoba Standing Committee on Agriculture recommend to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba that the Premier request an immediate meeting with the

Prime Minister of Canada in order to discuss an immediate cash infusion and long-term solutions to the farm income crisis, that the Premier encourage the Prime Minister to meet with a delegation led by the Premier of Manitoba made up of farm, business and municipal leaders, in order to fully reflect the devastation facing farmers, businesses and communities.

The motion is in order. Is the committee ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Chairperson: The question before the committee is as follows: BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Manitoba—

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Mr. Chairperson: Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the amendment?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Voice Vote

Mr. Chairperson: All those in favour of adopting the amendment, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Mr. Chairperson: All those opposed, say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Chairperson: In my opinion, the Yeas have it. The amendment is accordingly adopted.

* * *

Mr. Tweed: I guess, since we are talking detail a little bit, I think we have had some conversation, and maybe it has been amended in that when they are talking about the ethanol production and new variety of sugar beet, the second BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED on the second page, all I am suggesting is it does seem like we are identifying two and recommending that the provincial and federal governments pursue these opportunities. Could we just say "pursue these opportunities and others"? It is

more technical than it is anything. The way the federal government reacts sometimes with the questions they get, they would isolate it to those two events and they would not look beyond it.

Mr. Chairperson: Could I ask the member to submit that in writing?

It has been moved by Mr. Tweed that in the fourth BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the words "and others" be inserted after the word "opportunities." Is the committee agreeable to that change?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Chairperson: Agreed. The amendment is accordingly adopted.

Mr. Gerrard: I have two points. The first point deals with the fact that the request for \$500 million makes no reflection at all of what we heard repeatedly during the committee hearings, that the division of the \$500 million the last time did not really reflect the distribution of grain and oilseeds revenue. It reflected all farm revenue. I believe the committee should in some fashion look at that issue and make some sort of a recommendation vis-à-vis that because clearly there would be a major advantage to Manitoba if the \$500 million, if we were to get it the second time around, were distributed in a fashion which is more closely applicable to the needs of grain and oilseed producers across the country rather than all farmers.

The second point in this builds on one that I raised earlier. I think that there are issues. I think maybe I have a resolution that will get around the concerns that were raised earlier.

So I move an amendment, seconded by the Member for Emerson (Mr. Jack Penner), to add six additional clauses as follows:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Standing Committee on Agriculture suggest that the Province provide rebates for the education tax on farm land;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Standing Committee on Agriculture suggest that

the Province remove the provincial sales tax on farm inputs;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Standing Committee on Agriculture suggest that the Province provide its share of the negative margin payments under AIDA;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Standing Committee on Agriculture suggest that the Province of Manitoba and/or Crop Insurance provide compensation for farmers who seeded after the normal date for crop insurance coverage in 1999 because of the faulty advice provided at that time; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Standing Committee on Agriculture suggest that the Province act immediately to implement the Rose report and that the Province then subsequently make a request to the federal government to provide its share of costs where applicable; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Standing Committee on Agriculture suggest that the Province make changes to the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation to help young farmers along the lines of a proposal put forward by James Melnyk during the hearings of the Agriculture Committee.

Motion presented.

Mr. Chairperson: The motion is in order.

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, the member raises a lot of points that were raised at the committee hearings and certainly issues that should be addressed, but if you look at this heading, the heading of this resolution is Federal Support for Agriculture. All parties came together talking about the need to address the issue of low farm commodity prices and high input costs, low commodity prices that are depressed because of the level of subsidies put in by other countries. All of this resolution is focussed on the federal government, calling on the federal government to recognize that there is a farm crisis and that there is a need for the federal government to put support in. That is what this is focussed on.

* (23:00)

The issues that the member is bringing forward, although they may be in order, are diluting the whole issue here and all of the points that we want to take forward to the federal government. We are sending this resolution to the federal government. We are asking the Prime Minister to review it, and now we want to add in WHEREASEs that will focus on provincial issues.

So those are points that could perhaps be debated in the House, brought forward in another form, but I do not think that they fit in with what we are trying to focus on in this resolution, and that is federal support for agriculture. I would encourage committee members to vote against these amendments.

Mr. Ashton: Yes, I concur with the Minister of Agriculture. I think it is important not to distract from what we are dealing with here, and, quite frankly, too, if we were to get into a list of potential areas that we could look at, once again I would focus on the federal government.

To the Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard), the provincial government does not tax farm fuels. The federal government does. If you look at some of the other issues that were raised, the federal government takes 10 cents a litre out of every gas purchase in Manitoba, a lot of which is in rural Manitoba, a lot of which are farmers for non-farm purposes. The Province collects 11.5 cents and puts it back into the road system. That has been the case for the last 20, 30 years. I mean, I could run through a whole series of items here, and, quite frankly, again, I would not want something like this—I mean, if I was to read this amendment, it would look like the problem here is to do with a lot of the provincial charges.

I agree with the Minister of Agriculture. You can look at any or all of these things, but even if you get into, for example, mentioning the Rose report, to mention the Rose report but not to mention the fact that the federal government had the option—Rick Borotsik actually brought this to light—of doing exactly what Mr. Pitura called for, what I have called for, and that is to treat the southwest far more generously than they did—I mean, you could run through a whole series of these things.

The bottom line here is, if you start getting into this, I think it detracts from what the intent of this process is, and that in this particular case, it is federal support for agriculture; it is sending a clear message to the federal government. In that other place on a daily basis we argue the other stuff, and we will continue to argue the other stuff, I am sure. I mean, I have received questions and the minister has throughout this session, but, you know, we are this close; we are this close.

We are actually in the eleventh hour. That is kind of appropriate here. We are in the eleventh hour and just by one disagreement on a subamendment and a disagreement where it would take some of those theological experts to look at some of the debates back and forth, because it was getting like the number of angels you could fit on the head of a pin here.

This is not at that level anymore. We are knocking every last one of those angels off. We are throwing the pins out here. We are at the eleventh hour, we are that close to a consensus, and now we are going to get into our usual political discussions.

I just want to finish by saying the best part of this exercise is watching members of this committee—and I have been at every committee hearing and I only missed about half an hour of Monday's, and others have been in for part, but that is not the point. But, I tell you, at every one there has been an attempt to put aside our day-to-day political disagreements which are valid and focus in on the bigger picture which is sending a clear message to the federal government.

So I would urge us to defeat these motions. We can look at those and debate them in the House. Let us focus in on what we have in common. I think the rest is a real achievement that we can actually, three parties here, knowing some of the strong personalities, get anywhere close to agreeing on anything. It is a huge achievement.

That is what the farmers wanted by the way. That is what rural Manitoba wanted, and I think they would be very disappointed if at the eleventh hour so to speak, we were debating this

kind of resolution. So let us have a vote on it, decide and let us get the consensus on the bigger picture.

Mr. Derkach: First of all, I just want to say to the minister that I think we have moved a long way. I was just disappointed at the end that my colleague's resolution was not accepted, and I guess the minister felt that she had moved far enough and was not going to move any further. I think we all agree that we have accomplished significant progress.

This resolution that has been put forward, or the amendments that have been put forward, I find a little contradictory to what we are trying to accomplish in terms of the federal government. So I think what we need to do is if the Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) wants to bring this in as a separate resolution that perhaps would give direction to the provincial government, that is something we could debate and perhaps decide that maybe that is not a bad idea to take to our provincial government as well. But I think we need to separate the two because I have to agree that the resolution that we had worked on all evening is directed toward the federal government.

The provincial government has made its commitment to an additional \$38 million if the federal government will commit its share. I think that I understood from the resolution. So, therefore, I think we have come to a fairly close agreement on that.

The other issue which has been brought forward now is one that speaks to the provincial government, and they are valid issues. The Rose report is a very valid issue, and I think that has to be addressed. And I say for the western people of Manitoba, not just the southwest, because although I do not consider myself as part of the southwestern region, the impact of '99 did have an implication on people in my area as well.

So the Rose report speaks to the hurt that was suffered by people not just in the agriculture sector, but indeed in business as well. I think there is some validity to this resolution, but it should stand on its own as a separate resolution,

directing the Province rather than us—kind of blending it in with the other resolution as well.

Mr. Jack Penner: I guess I am going to have to somewhat, not contradict, but maybe be a bit on a different side from my colleague on this. Only for one reason, and I would have suggested to the mover of the resolution that I might not support the amendments that he has put forward had the minister not insisted on one inclusive item in her own amendment.

She now has said that we should look at both the short term and the long term immediately. I think that is a mistake. I think we need to separate very clearly, the short-term requirement and make that argument very clearly with the Prime Minister and not confuse it with the long-term solutions.

I raised this with the minister before she moved her amendment. I said we had agreed previously to separate the two. We wanted to do the short term, and that is why my resolution was so specific and so clear. I would suggest that the mover is quite legitimate in including these issues in this resolution because the minister has now said, by her own admission, of her own amendment, that we should address immediately the long-term solutions.

* (23:10)

So the member makes the case. Here are the long outstanding issues that need to be addressed and that the minister is now saying we will now look at the long term, and that is what this resolution says. So I say to the minister that she is a designer of her own dilemma. Therefore, it would be very difficult, I think, for her own government members to now vote against the motion that is before this committee. So I would encourage members to think very loudly, and very long, and very hard about what they have done to themselves by amending my resolution or defeating my resolution.

Mr. Ashton: I think we are going from the ridiculous to the sublime here now, and I maybe suggest that Mr. Penner and Mr. Derkach go and discuss this privately because it is getting quite frightening. I am disagreeing with Mr. Derkach more and more here.

First of all, the public said they wanted focus on short term and long term. I sat here and I heard a lot of people saying immediate cash infusion, No. 1 thing. If the member is saying that we should not have included the long term, we could take it out of the resolution, but I think it would be a disservice to the public, quite frankly, who cannot understand that we need a long-term solution.

Quite frankly, if Mr. Penner thinks this is a long-term solution, I think he has some difficulties here. This is not a long-term solution. This is one member of the committee taking a number of the items that were raised by members of the public, which may or may not be legitimate items. I mean, these were raised by some of the members of the public. It does not deal with the main focus, which is federal support for agriculture, but there is nothing in here about long-term farm programs, long-term sustainability for the agricultural sector. These are items, if anything, that fall into maybe medium term. As I said again, if we want to now open this up to a shopping list of concerns, I have got my own list.

Mr. Chair, when you get to be Minister of Transportation, sometimes your hearing is better when you hear certain issues, but I heard fuel tax, and I heard federal fuel tax. I heard the tax on farm fuel. I am sure I heard that. So I have my own list. We have how many members in the committee. We could just start this whole thing again. We could each go around the table, come up with our shopping list of things to introduce.

I could get a little bit political here. I am almost tempted to wonder if there is not an effort now to kind of deflect this a little bit off course from what the resolution said, federal support for agriculture, and focus on the provincial government. If that was the case, I would be very disappointed because a lot of us have checked our partisan baggage at the door on this one, because we can debate tomorrow, we can debate the next day, the day after. There are all sorts of mechanisms the member has and the Opposition has. There are Opposition Day motions. You can bring the motions. You want to bring this in, you can bring it in any time. You can bring it in under all sorts of different provisions of the rules. But, you know, we

decided to check our partisan baggage at the door on this one, and we decided to focus. I know that there are some members of the public here. If we had the rest of the members of the public here, I think by now their eyes would be rolling around their heads watching this happen.

We are that close to a consensus. So I would suggest, if we have to do it one more time and vote on this, let us do it because, at this rate, I can see us getting that close, and we are going to go off and off, and get further and further apart. I will tell you, in another half an hour or an hour's worth of this, and it will be just like the Legislature debates. There is nothing wrong with that. I agree with political debate and politics in the House, but this is one time we said we were going to do it differently. But you know what? We are starting to sound like the old way of doing it. So my suggestion is this: Vote on this and get back to trying to get as close to a consensus as we will ever get.

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, the member is concerned about the long-term solutions in the THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED. Well, we were trying to accommodate the member's concerns, but I would be very happy to withdraw that whole thing and go back to the original THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, and that would solve the issue about his concern about long-term solutions.

I would be happy to do that, but what do you really think the Prime Minister will do if he sees this? Do you think the Prime Minister is going to meet with a delegation when the resolution suggests that it is the Province that should be taking the action? This is just giving the federal government an excuse to say: We do not have to meet with them; the Province can solve them. I wonder who the member is really standing up, or whether he is worried about the federal Liberals having to take some responsibility for this farm crisis. If you want to put this, why do you not go a little further? I would ask the member why he would not go a little further and put in all the things that the Province does that are not cost-shared by the federal government? Over \$170 million in supports that the provincial government puts into farming communities that the federal government does not do, why are those not included in this? I think that it is weakening our resolution, and if the members

think that the final THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED is weakening this resolution, I would be quite happy to go back to the original resolution.

Certainly, the suggestions that the member is putting forward here are getting into partisan politics and are trying to take away focus of what we really want here, and this is to focus on the federal government. By putting in these kind of amendments, it is playing right into the federal government's hands to say well, why do we have to worry about this. The Province has all kinds of issues that they can address.

Mr. Gerrard: I think Mr. Maguire was first and then me.

Mr. Maguire: Mr. Chairman, I would not necessarily want to speak on this issue. There is a way to solve this and that is to take the word "federal" off "federal support for agriculture" and just call it "support for agriculture," because many of these issues—it was just a suggestion if you really want to deal with these—

Mr. Chairperson: A point of order, Mr. Smith.

Point of Order

Mr. Smith: Mr. Chair, I would just like some clarification. There were a number of members calling for question, and I just wonder if that does not take precedence over asking other speakers to speak. The majority of the folks sitting around the table here had asked and called for question, and I am seeking your wisdom on that.

Mr. Chairperson: Just on that point of order, as long as there are speakers on the list and question is called, I must—[interjection] If I could have some order, please. As long as there are speakers on the list when question is called, I need to consult with the people who I have on the list. If there is nobody on the list, then we can call for question, but I do have Mr. Maguire followed by Mr. Gerrard.

So I must rule that there is no point of order.

* * *

Mr. Smith: Just one more clarification, Mr. Chair. You do not continue to add to the list—

An Honourable Member: Well, I might want to say some more.

An Honourable Member: I may, too.

Mr. Chairperson: I must clarify with Mr. Smith, is that a point of order that you have just raised? What I ruled is that as long as there are people on the list, and I will continue to add people to the list as they want to speak, that takes precedence over the call for question.

Mr. Maguire: Mr. Chairman, I would just like for the record to say that I was saying that while that might be a possibility, it was not what I was recommending, just so that the members of the Government do not get too up in arms over what might be coming.

I would say though that these kinds of things could have been included in the draft, because they were suggestions that came from the speakers that were presented to us. They are not included in the draft of the outline of the committee meetings that were held. It may be something that we could look at there as well.

I would have a hard time voting against these, though, given the fact that it does ask for—my colleague from River Heights has asked for the immediate implementation of the Rose report, which was near and dear to my heart in southwest Manitoba. As the minister of highways has indicated, there is a need there. There has certainly been a recognized disaster in that area.

Some of the other things, I can certainly see why the Government would not want to deal with these at the present time, because they could actually be done. It would take a rebalancing of the Budget, realignment of it with some greater priority focused on agriculture than what has been. So I think that they are immediate issues that would help agriculture, there is no doubt about that, if they were implemented.

We have been focussing, however, on the resolution that was before us. I have other amendments and resolutions and parts of it that I could have brought forward in regard to the issues of southwest Manitoba, but I have not in

the overall venue of trying to bring a resolve to this issue and try to get on with focussing on the federal government and trying to get some clarity on it. The Government knows full well that a number of these issues have been already asked for, and they heard the farmers in Manitoba call for the committee to implement them as well. I respect those farmers' wishes. In the issue of trying to move this whole issue forward with some similar unanimity to what we have at the present time through the agreement, I, too, would like to be on record just to say I felt the amendment that was put forward by the Member for Emerson (Mr. Jack Penner) was clear in what it asked for.

I will take the minister for her clarity on that, clarity of the amendment she put forward. The "intent" is the word I am looking for, and I can only hope that the Premier (Mr. Doer) will share that intent with her. I am sure she will talk to him in the morning about it.

We need to make sure this focus goes to the Prime Minister as quickly as it can so we can get on with trying to find some immediate support for farmers without muddying the waters any further, and get some greater clarification on this issue so that farmers are not left in the lurch, so that farmers can in fact, with any kind of possibility of getting some kind of commitment, at least go to their bankers and say there may be some dollars coming, in fact that there will be some dollars coming, that they can actually get the required operating to put the 2001 crop in the ground. I will not go into it again because I outlined the other night the series of events that are taking place that need to put dollars in farmers' hands to get the dollars to get that financing together for this spring.

Mr. Chair, I will, however, if it comes to a vote and we are going to vote, as I have said, I will vote with the Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) on these issues in the amendments, because I just feel strongly that some of them could be done, but certainly, as I have indicated, it is probably the wish of the Government that they not proceed with them at this time. Thank you.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Chairman, I would just like to address a couple of items related to these and

address some of the comments that have been made.

First of all, I think it is quite clear that the original charge to the standing committee involved addressing both federal and provincial issues. The way that this was worded in various of the clauses in fact calls upon the Standing Committee on Agriculture to study and make recommendations with regard to a meaningful long-term sustainable approach, and so on. So, quite clearly, the intent was to look and make recommendations, both to federal and provincial governments.

Quite clearly, from the BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED clause the minister herself brought in, which calls upon federal and provincial governments to review current safety net programs, this, in its current form, addresses both federal and provincial. I think it does not detract. In fact, it probably helps the case in Ottawa, if we are seen to be making recommendations that can be implemented at the provincial level, as well as at the federal level.

I do not think the argument that this committee should only be making recommendations which affect the federal government, holds any water whatsoever. I think we should look at what farmers need, and look at what can be done at both provincial and federal levels. That is what we should be putting forward. I think that this fits; these suggestions fit very well within that context.

* (23:20)

I think, second, it is important to speak to the situation in southwestern Manitoba. Clearly, producers, time and time again during committee hearings, referred to the situation there. The suggestions that are being put forward here are those that came from producers and from those who presented to the hearings. It is my view that many producers in the southwest of Manitoba will feel that this committee has not done its job adequately, if there are not some specific clauses which refer to the situation in southwestern Manitoba. So I would argue and argue quite strongly that these resolutions, which provide some approach to addressing the hurt and the need which is in southwestern Manitoba, are an important component of this package.

The Rose report, as we all well know, has been outstanding for some time. We had a number of comments indeed in the Legislature today which spoke glowingly of Bob Rose, of his contributions in putting forward the Rose report. Several members spoke in the Legislature, indeed, today of the need to act. These could, I suppose, be regarded in part as long term, but I would suggest that these measures could be implemented, in fact, quickly, that they are measures which would have a very significant impact and that if we are looking at producers needing \$40 to \$60 an acre, that clearly if the resolution were to achieve a \$500 million payout from Ottawa, that even if that were adjusted on the basis of grains and oilseeds, only that producers in Manitoba on average are probably still only going to get somewhere in the neighbourhood of, at the very best, double what they are getting now, which is \$7 to \$8 an acre, and that we are talking, therefore, \$15 or \$16 an acre.

We are still a long way. When we are talking in terms of support, if there approaches a reduction of farm taxes and so on, which could contribute rebate on farm taxes, which could contribute in the neighbourhood of \$8 an acre in some areas, that this would be a significant contribution. I would suggest that if we have a hope of getting to the \$40 or \$50 an acre that many producers have suggested in terms of overall support, that we are going to have to look at including these sorts of measures.

So I would argue strongly that these measures should be included, and I hope that members of this committee will support me.

Mr. Chairperson: Is the committee ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Chairperson: The question has been called. Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the amendment?

Voice Vote

Mr. Chairperson: All those in favour of adopting the amendment, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Mr. Chairperson: All those opposed, say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Chairperson: In my opinion, the Nays have it. The amendment is accordingly defeated.

* * *

Mr. Jack Penner: Just one short item of business that I think we should resolve, or at least consider, and that is, that I think there were basically two approaches that we had sort of indicated we would take. We would look at the short-term significant ones and ask for that immediate meeting with the Prime Minister. The other one is the siphoning out the long-term issues out of the many presentations that were made. I am asking whether the minister might have some staff available within the department—and I know there are some good ones that are good writers and researchers within the department—and I was wondering whether we might ask them to go through their reports and pick out the issues that should be addressed by a long-term kind of strategy; that we might want the committee to direct the writing of a paper that we might want to consider forwarding to both levels of government, federal and provincial, as a committee.

I only put this as notice to the committee that we consider in some future meeting—it may not take that long before it is called again to consider this, but to consider at some future meeting, how we would want to make those presentations, and whether it could be done to the Standing Committee in Ottawa, or to the Prime Minister's office, or the Minister of Agriculture and, similarly, in the province of Manitoba.

I think we have a responsibility to the people that presented to us to make those presentations to both levels of government as a joint committee. I wonder whether the minister might want to free up some staff to do that for us, and whether the committee would concur in that kind of an approach.

We do not need to raise that or debate it tonight. I just raise that as a matter of business

that should be considered at a future meeting that we might ask the Chairman to at some point in time call the committee again to make those kinds of considerations.

Mr. Derkach: I have to agree with my colleague that there is unfinished business here with regard to the long term. I think that we need to ferret that out from the many presentations, 80 presentations or whatever were made, and that if we can compile the long-term issues and then have this committee recalled again to deal with those and develop a strategy that whereby we could address those issues.

Some of that, as Doctor Gerrard has pointed out this evening, relates directly to what we could do as a Province. Some of them relate to what the federal government could do. When you look at the issues of the Rose report, I think they speak directly to the longer-term approach that can be taken. I think that speaks to both the federal and the provincial government.

But I have to support Mr. Penner in suggesting that this be done and that the committee be recalled as soon as possible after the work has been done in itemizing those issues.

Mr. Chairperson: Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the amendment as amended? Agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Chairperson: The amendment as amended is accordingly adopted.

Shall this resolution as amended be adopted by the committee? Agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Chairperson: Agreed.

Normal procedure would have only the amendments appear in the committee report. Is it the will of the committee to include the text of the entire resolution in the report, as amended?
[Agreed]

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, we have just about come to the end, and I would like to thank

all committee members for their hard work and patience and determination to stay at this table for the many hours that they have, and certainly, the people who have been in the audience as well.

There is one other issue, and that was the report of the committee that was circulated last meeting. I have not had any comment back on it. I have copies of that report again and I would move that the report of the committee be accepted by the committee.

Mr. Jack Penner: Well, Madam Chair, I wonder whether we might leave that report until the next meeting before we adopt that report of the committee, because it really needs a significant amount of work, I think, to it before we would be willing to adopt this as the report of the committee.

* (23:30)

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, we have heard people say there is urgency. We want this concluded with speed. We have had this circulated before for the resolution to go back to the House. We also want to submit the report from the Chair of the committee, and that is why it was circulated the other day and people had the opportunity to review it, so I would ask that the committee, since you have had the time to review this report, if there are any comments on it. I hear the member saying that there is a section that has to be changed, but I would ask if you have some comments on it. Otherwise, I would move that the report be accepted so that it can be tabled as well.

Mr. Jack Penner: Mr. Chairman, I think there are more changes that are required to this report to fully address the issues that we have dealt with and I think there are some historicals here that are included in this report that I am not sure should be. There are others that are not mentioned here that are deleted and I am not sure what the intent of the minister is with this report, with this two or one-and-a-half pager. I am not sure what her intent is and I would suspect this is more of a formality than anything else. So I would ask the minister to consider giving us a bit of time to look at this and there could well be, I suspect, a final report at some

point in time in the future, but that has nothing to do with the urgency of the address by the Premier to the Prime Minister. All those actions can be taken before a final report is written. So I do not think we really need to adopt this. That brings finality to it, and I am not sure we want to bring finality to this yet.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chair, I would concur with my colleague that perhaps we could agree to move the resolution forward, but that this report, which should probably be attached to the presentations that are going to be recorded in Hansard, is something that we would probably want to ensure that all the details are included in that.

I think there are some changes that have to be made as a result of tonight's decision, so perhaps this is something that needs to be given a little more thought to and I am not suggesting a long period of time, but even if the minister and the critic and the Leader of the Liberal Party could, at some point in time, meet, you know, some of the changes that have to be made here and move it along in that way, I think it would be beneficial. To approve it at this time of the night with the changes that we have made this evening, I think, would be inappropriate and a little hasty.

Ms. Wowchuk: As you can see, the top of the report is marked "Draft," and, as also indicated, there are some changes that have been made tonight that have to be reflected, but what I would suggest is, that within a very short time, in the next couple of days, if each of the critics would bring forward some suggestions that could be adopted in to me, and we would work those suggestions in and share it with you again.

Mr. Ashton: I just echo what the minister said, and there is also the possibility of doing an interim report on the amendment as well, that has been adopted by the committee, so that is another option.

Ms. Wowchuk: Then I would ask for unanimous consent to withdraw the report and ask for agreement that suggestions will be made within the next couple of days, so that we can work on the final report, and the resolution gets reported in the House.

Mr. Ashton: I think there might be agreement to have an interim report from the committee that would report this amendment as soon as possible to the House.

Mr. Chairperson: Is it the will of this committee to report the proceedings of the

previous meetings and what we have decided upon here tonight to the House? *[Agreed]*

That concludes the business before the committee this evening. Committee rise.

COMMITTEE ROSE AT: 11:37 p.m.