

AGRICULTURE

ASSISTANCE FOR GRAIN PRODUCERS

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. The Prime Minister two weeks ago announced that there would be \$1 billion for grain farmers across Canada. Will the Deputy Prime Minister confirm, as farm groups have told us today, that the federal Government has no specific proposals to make to the farm groups that are meeting with the various Ministers this afternoon?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I can only repeat what the Prime Minister and what the Minister of Agriculture have said in this House on previous occasions, namely, that a meeting was held with the provincial Deputy Ministers of Agriculture. Today, I believe, a meeting is being held with representatives of farm organizations.

This Government does not choose to outline its programs in a unilateral manner but seeks co-operation and the goodwill of the producing community and the provinces to put together the best and the biggest farm aid package ever put together in the history of this country.

REQUEST FOR SPECIFIC PROPOSALS

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Deputy Prime Minister. This is not a new problem. The problem the grain farmers face has been known for many, many months. Why is it that the Government does not have any specific proposal? Why after all this time are there not specific proposals about which these farm groups can be consulted?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, it is too bad the Hon. Member does not pay attention to what goes on in the agricultural community because on August 27 the federal Minister of Agriculture and his provincial counterparts did meet to lay out a strategy for assistance to those producer groups affected by the price war in commodities, namely, grain and other commodities affected in the international marketplace. That is precisely what is going on. At that time a figure of around a billion dollars was outlined. This Government has responded indicating a willingness to support the farmers of Canada to the order of approximately a billion dollars. The details are now being worked out.

Mr. Murphy: The banks got better treatment than that.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

POSSIBILITY OF GOVERNMENT MAKING CUT-BACKS

Mr. Jean-Claude Malépart (Montreal—Sainte-Marie): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Employment and Immigration and concerns the changes to the unemployment insurance system recommended by the Forget Commission.

Can the Minister tell us whether he was informed at his meetings with Mr. Forget that the Government should reduce its expenditures by \$2.37 billion on the backs of seasonal, temporary and part-time workers who work less than six months a year?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, as he did yesterday and the day before, the Hon. Member for Montreal—Sainte-Marie has referred to the recommendations of the Forget report. I have to tell him that, when the Government establishes a Royal Commission, it must then wait for the Commission to table its report officially. It will do so on November 30, 1986.

POSSIBILITY OF MAKING CUT-BACKS IN RELATION TO CERTAIN GROUPS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Jean-Claude Malépart (Montreal—Sainte-Marie): Mr. Speaker, did the Minister learn in his two meetings with Mr. Forget that, according to the recommendations of the Commission, the Government should take away 40 per cent from the group of workers with an income under \$200 a week while the cut-back will be 22 per cent for those with a weekly income over \$400. Is the Minister aware of that?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I have said many times that it is wrong to quote what a report might say to try to put fear into the minds of Canadians. This is an example of such a practice.

[English]

COMMISSION'S REPORT

Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber—Port au Port—St. Barbe): Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Minister of Employment and Immigration, a Minister who wants us to believe that he hears no evil, sees no evil, and refuses to speak evil of the recommendations of the Forget Commission.

Some Hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Tobin: Does the Minister not realize that he can no longer ignore those recommendations simply because the final report has not been presented to the Government? Is he prepared to respond fully if I provide him today with yet another detailed oral briefing on the contents of the report?

An Hon. Member: Are you the commissioner?

Mr. Tobin: I have got the report.