

*Proceedings on Adjournment Motion*

and the budget bills before that can be brought into effect. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson) announced that there would be accelerated depreciation in respect of on-farm storage, and an arrangement will be worked out in this regard as well as in respect of additional on-farm dryers.

The hon. member complained about the over-delivery quotas being set for tough and damp grain, and the fact that there were not enough box cars to deal with it. He must realize that there are millions of acres in western Canada, and when you multiply that by three bushels, that does not mean automatically that the next day you can get this grain out of western Canada. Anyone who has any familiarity with the situation knows that there are physical limitations involved. It is also a well known fact that in western Canada there has been some movement of dry grain out of inland terminals to provide for sufficient space around the drying facilities in these five terminal elevators; so the maximum use can in fact be made of these drying facilities, which is something of the order of 165,000 bushels per day.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard):** Order, please.

**Mr. Olson:** I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, that I have run out of time, because I have lots more to say on this subject.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT—RECLASSIFICATION OF SURPLUS RAILWAY MAIL CLERKS

**Mr. John L. Skoberg (Moose Jaw):** Mr. Speaker, perhaps I should give the minister my time. When I read an article regarding the blast that had occurred regarding the bad faith treatment of surplus railway mail clerks, it immediately came to my mind that this situation exists in my own city of Moose Jaw. This situation can be traced directly back to the action of the Post Office Department and the Postmaster General in cancelling the mail contracts to the mail passenger trains which were in existence. That cancellation of mail contracts to these passenger trains brought about this classification of surplus railway mail clerks. This was never required before. We all know that Moose Jaw at one time was one of the centres which employed a large number of railway mail clerks. At this time they are practically non-existent.

I should like to ask the Postmaster General three questions. I am sure he has read the [Mr. Olson.]

article to which I have reference. I should like to know whether or not railway mail clerks have been integrated in a seniority list. Let me make it absolutely clear that I am not entering into any jurisdictional dispute between the postal workers and the Public Service Alliance of Canada, or any association which is represented in this particular regard.

• (10:10 p.m.)

I would like to ask whether the Post Office Department unilaterally withdrew the guarantees given by the Craig formula to maintain job security for surplus railway mail clerks. My second question is: Was any assurance given to the surplus railway mail clerks' representatives by either the Post Office Department or Treasury Board to the effect that there would be no change in the status of surplus mail clerks until the matter could be settled through collective bargaining? If the surplus railway mail clerks have been reclassified by the Post Office Department and approved by Treasury Board without consultation or collective bargaining, I suggest this government stands convicted of bargaining in bad faith, and their word is completely suspect.

The Postmaster General should clarify this matter. In my opinion it is a complete farce to even suggest that some of the members of this cabinet are remotely concerned about democratic, collective bargaining if what is said to be happening is really a fact. I refer to what we have read in this paper. I ask the minister to clarify the points I have raised at this time.

**Hon. Eric W. Kierans (Postmaster General):** Mr. Speaker, those are clearly inflammatory charges. I think I could probably answer all three questions by saying that on Wednesday next there will be a meeting between members of Treasury Board, the president of the Public Service Alliance of Canada and officials of my department in which they will review the whole situation. Therefore I can say that no action has been taken to reclassify the surplus mail clerks, of which the hon. member has accused us.

I would say however that we are quite impatient that this reclassification get on, because we now have a situation where there are what you might call active surplus mail clerks and those who are waiting for an assignment of new tasks. The problem that concerns us is that the ones who have already been assigned other tasks, whether as postal