

What we are trying to do is what is in the best interest of Canadian farmers. In the process down the road, potentially we will have more work for the kind of people he is concerned about.

Mr. Rod Laporte (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, that is not what the release said today.

The Canadian Wheat Board has stated it had to use Seattle because there was no room in Vancouver. It also said that it would be cheaper for farmers if the grain was moved through Seattle. Today's press release states that neither of these statements are in fact correct.

Will the minister advise the Canadian Wheat Board to correct these inaccuracies? Will he direct the Canadian Wheat Board at least to make public the final costs of this cargo diversion.

The Canadian farmer has a right to know, the grain industry has a right to know and the taxpayer has a right to know.

Hon. Charles Mayer (Minister of Western Economic Diversification and Minister of State (Grains and Oilseeds)): Just to say again, Mr. Speaker, the Wheat Board has advised me that this is additional tonnage that would not be moved if we did not take it through Seattle.

The other thing the hon. member should know, if he is concerned about doing business with the Americans, so far this year we have trans-shipped through transfer houses along the St. Lawrence over a million tonnes of U.S. grain. We regularly do business with the Americans, which creates jobs for Canadians by moving American product. I do not think there is a lot wrong with using U.S. facilities if it helps Canadian farmers now with the potential to make more work for Canadians tomorrow.

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CANADA ASSISTANCE PLAN

Mr. Felix Holtmann (Portage—Interlake): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister responsible for national health and welfare. The government of Manitoba has recently converted the manner in which the provincial tax credits will be paid to welfare recipients. Instead of receiving a lump tax credit as all other Manitobans receive, welfare recipients will now have a

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portion of the credit included in each monthly social assistance cheque.

My question is simply this. Is this discriminatory practice allowed by the federal-provincial arrangements under the Canada Assistance Plan?

Mrs. Barbara Sparrow (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, that is a very interesting twist and I appreciate my colleague from Portage—Interlake bringing this to our attention.

It is my understanding that the department received some brief information this morning on this particular proposal. As it is quite complex dealing with the Canada Assistance Plan it is going to take some time to directly assess whether proposed supplementary benefits will indeed be replacing the tax credit.

I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, as well as all my colleagues that the Canada Assistance Plan is very important to each and every one of us. It supports many Canadians and I thank the hon. member for his question.

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PUBLIC WORKS

Mrs. Diane Marleau (Sudbury): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Public Works or his replacement here today.

I want to go back to the termination of the contract for the construction of the veterans affairs building in Kirkland Lake. Since termination will result in the loss of more than \$800,000 to firms across northern Ontario and since the original developer has now demonstrated his ability to meet Public Works criteria, why does the minister and his department continue to refuse to reconsider and reactivate the original contract?

Mr. Dave Worthy (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, the developer who was low bidder on that contract was given the contract in good faith. He indicated to the Department of Public Works that he had financial difficulties.

After two extensions he was not able to produce the bid bond that was required and so the contract was terminated. The discussions were then undertaken with the second bidder and those discussions are continuing in good faith.