

*Government Orders*

I would certainly ask the minister to take that into account and perhaps to say something about that later if he can when we get into Committee of the Whole for instance that would reassure us and reassure the grain handlers that that kind of concern is going to be adequately dealt with.

If those kinds of commitments could be given, it would certainly facilitate the passage of the legislation. I hope that we can over the next little while hear something back from the minister on this so that we can be able to say that the process here was not a *fait accompli*, that the government was open to suggestions from the opposition and from the union and that we might actually make some progress in improving the bill which has been put before us.

**Mr. Lyle Kristiansen (Kootenay West—Revelstoke):** Madam Speaker, the bill before us, an act to provide for the resumption and continuance of grain handling operations at Thunder Bay, Ontario, raises a number of questions that I and a number of my colleagues have some difficulty with, both in principle and in operation.

• (1230)

While we understand the very natural anxieties of the agricultural community on the Canadian prairies, we also through a long history of involvement, for many of us a direct involvement, in matters dealing with industrial relations have considerable sympathy and understanding for the very real daily problems faced by employees at Thunder Bay.

Politics is a matter of choices. My colleague from Churchill earlier today asked a couple of very pertinent questions as to why the government, when it has so loudly proclaimed its very valid interest in getting the grain moving through the terminal at Thunder Bay, has not taken what action might be taken in order to ensure that the port of Churchill, which has storage facilities that are unused and which is able to take its former historic role as being a key shipper of prairie grain, remain functional. It has not been put on track when the government should have been able to see this problem coming.

No one wants to question motivations, but it still is a question that should be answered. If it is so vital that that

prairie grain move and if the government could see this problem emerging, as most of us think it could, why then was action not taken to see that the port of Churchill remain functional? That is a question the government has to answer.

Other of my colleagues, the member for Winnipeg—Transcona and the member for Churchill, spent some time, and I want to just touch again, on the question of single person mediation and arbitration as opposed to the request that has been made for a three member panel for mediation and arbitration.

The normal and valid argument against third party intervention generally is that the immediate and almost sole interest of a third party that is intervening is to end an existing dispute and simply get a contract signed. That arbitrator does not have to live with the results of whatever is contained in that collective agreement and no third party has to live through the daily, weekly, monthly and yearly very serious problems and relationships that often exist within any given industrial undertaking.

We all agree that in some way or another because of the important public interest involved in this dispute, there will be some third party intervention. We understand that but once that choice has been made, surely we should attempt to define that intervention in such a way as it can most accurately reflect and work out answers to problems which are understanding and sensitive to the continuing problems that take place within the Thunder Bay operation and within that industry.

What we have submitted and what other parties have submitted is that can best be done not by a single mediator/arbitrator but by a three member panel in which there is direct involvement from both the employees who are most directly involved and the employers who are most directly involved because they know what those relationships have been.

That is something you cannot learn by simply listening to submissions and reading briefs within a necessarily very compressed period. It is something that you can only really get to understand if you have lived through the previous history within that specific undertaking or operation.