

Government Orders

logic to bear, though it might catch the member off guard at this time of day.

I do not mind people flacking for a minister, but when they read from a press release, then all logic is lost. It is very interesting that the NDP and the Liberals have to defend the maritimes. One reason we are defending the maritimes is that the members on that side of the House who were elected from that area have walked out on them. This is a perfect example. The government has taken away another benefit from that area, as it has taken away so many benefits in the last five years.

The hon. member stands up and says: "If it is good enough for the Prime Minister, it is good enough for me and it is good enough for my people. I do not care about all the downsides."

I would like the hon. member to describe in a sentence or two exactly what he believes is the way the federal government is helping these people in the maritimes. All we see from this side of the House is the removal of funds from regional economic development, the loss of transportation subsidies and all the infrastructure help that used to be given under previous governments. There is nothing but taking away.

Just before we hear the budget in 10 or 12 minutes, we have seen that back-bencher give a perfect rendition of what everybody on that side is going to have to go through for the next couple of weeks. Perhaps he could just give us a little insight as to what he thinks this government is actually doing for the maritimes.

Mr. Crosby (Halifax West): Apparently the member thought my presentation was convoluted. I do not have a blackboard, but let me try to make it as simple as I can. Write \$40 million. It is hard for a member of the Liberal party to understand dollars and cents, but just take that \$40 million and give it to the railways of Canada. Then figure out what the railways of Canada are going to do for Atlantic Canada with the \$40 million. The answer will come back very quickly; nothing. The facilities have been in place for a hundred years. They do not spend a nickel or a dime of that subsidization on facilities.

We want to take the \$40 million and apply it in some other way, or some part of it. I do not mind if some of it goes to reducing the deficit, because that is what is

creating the economic problem in the first place. I do not expect members of the opposition to understand that.

Let me give a concrete example in case the member did not get that first exercise. The Atlantic Farmers' Council say there are one million tonnes of feed grain per year utilized by livestock raisers in Atlantic Canada. Now, 500,000 tonnes is for local consumption. Approximately \$20 a tonne is saved by farmers because of the at and east. We only need to subsidize the purchase of the feed grains by that amount and we will have satisfied the farmers in their difficulty. I hope that is understood.

We do not even need to do that. If we do not protect Ontario corn growers, we can remove the countervail. If we do not protect other segments of the industry in other parts of Canada, we can allow for imports. But the member from Saskatchewan has already said no to imports. Do not import feed grains into Atlantic Canada, make them pay the heavy price they have to pay for getting western grains. That is why he wants the at and east subsidy, because he wants to sell grain. I do not blame him for that. But do not pretend you are trying to help Atlantic Canada.

• (1620)

Mr. Crawford: Madam Speaker, I have a question for clarification. I believe I heard the hon. member from Halifax state that they are trying to help the eastern farmer by being more efficient. I will be quite honest with the hon. member. If he helps the eastern farmer, he will help farmers in central Canada because we are both going under. I want him to clarify his statement that there is a plan to help the farmer become more efficient. Right now our inputs are more than we get for our crops. If the member can explain it to me, maybe I can support the bill. I doubt it but you explain it to me.

Mr. Crosby: Madam Speaker, apparently the member is not aware of the assistance now provided to the livestock industry in Atlantic Canada through the Feed Freight Assistance Program, which also involves subsidization. In that case, however, the government subsidization is between the persons who receive the subsidization, the industry people, and the government.

We just do not funnel funds out according to some formula introduced by the Liberal government 30 years