

Oral Questions

the process of being edited and I hope to make them public shortly, as I indicated I would.

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RAILWAYS**CROWSNEST PASS RATE—IMPACT OF CHANGES ON FARMERS**

Mr. Len Gustafson (Assiniboia): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister, who will remember that in this House he said to western Canadians, and western farmers in particular, that while they had no representation west of Winnipeg, he would look into the interests of the western farmers. The announcement yesterday in Winnipeg was not in the best interests of the western farmer.

● (1440)

Is the Prime Minister aware of the burden which he has placed on the farmers? Wheat prices have dropped \$1 a bushel in the last year. Cost of production has increased 25 per cent in the last year. The over-all loss of income to farmers is estimated to be 28 per cent. Is the Prime Minister aware of these facts, and is he aware of what he has done by the announcement made yesterday by his Minister in Winnipeg?

Hon. Donald J. Johnston (Minister of State for Economic Development and Minister of State for Science and Technology): Madam Speaker, I suppose I should not say I am surprised at the question from the Hon. Member for Assiniboia. It is clear that there is no unified position on the benches across from us, but I would hope that when the necessary legislation is tabled in the House we would see them come forward with one voice. For example, I look at the statements made by the Hon. Member for Lisgar to the CBC on January 18, some two weeks ago, when he said, "We are generally in agreement with the Gilson thrust. We are not completely united because the country is not united. The Hon. Members from Saskatchewan have reservations and have been putting them forward very strongly within our own caucus".

It is perfectly clear, Madam Speaker, that the question, and opinion, if you like, expressed by the Hon. Member, does not represent a consensus of representatives from western Canada on that side of the House. Therefore I would take issue, first of all, with the statement about additional burdens being placed on western farmers because opportunities are being given to western farmers in this package. I dearly hope, Madam Speaker, that when the legislation comes forward it will be scrutinized with the objectivity expressed by the Hon. Member for Lisgar in the interview which he gave to CBC.

LONG-TERM IMPACT

Mr. Len Gustafson (Assiniboia): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is also directed to the Prime Minister. I am disappointed he did not answer my question because I believe he has a responsibility to answer to the farmers of Canada. Is the Prime Minister aware of the long-term impact

of what happened yesterday in Winnipeg, the long-term impact on the farmers? Within six to eight years the cost of this implementation will be \$1 a bushel. Is the Prime Minister aware of the fact that, if the farmers are destroyed, grass will grow in the streets of our cities?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member shows concern about the long-term impact. Surely everyone in this country has reflected on the long-term impact of doing nothing about the transportation system in the West.

Hon. Members on that side of the House are complaining about the inadequacies of the transportation system, the rail system. They have been asking for its improvement. It is a statistical fact, it is knowledge, that if the rail system is not improved there will be bottlenecks by the middle of this decade. The farmers will not be able to move their grain. The miners will not be able to move their potash. Coal will not be able to move. There will be a jam of transportation in the West.

The Government has looked at the long-term future of the West. Some \$20 billion in private and public moneys will be invested over the next few years in order to improve transportation in the West so that farmers and other producers can move their produce, so they can export it.

Naturally, the Tory Party is saying, "Don't do anything about it. We have no solution, but whatever you bring in to solve it, even if it is \$20 billion, we will complain." You do not represent the West.

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LABOUR CONDITIONS**INCREASE IN UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE**

Hon. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Employment and Immigration. Within the context of the tragedy of 1.5 million Canadians unemployed last year, we saw a dramatic increase in the number of young people unemployed, that is, between the ages of 15 and 24, a dramatic increase of 37.3 per cent. Many of these young people are university graduates of last year.

We are now just a few months away from the time when more young people will be coming from our universities and post-secondary institutions into a jobless market. Will the Minister tell us what new programs, or what hope does he have for these young people coming into a job market which is already flooded with unemployed young people?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, this year, as in past years, the Government of Canada will be putting forward a major employment program for students, which is called "Summer Canada". It is through this program we have provided a very major basis of summertime employment to allow students to