

of the jobs from that old elevator are about to be lost some time this month or next month. It is a real black eye, and a sore point for Prince Rupert which expected the new elevator to take on far more than 26 workers, and with a net gain rather than a net loss.

Mr. Mazankowski: Mr. Speaker, in response to the Hon. Member's first question, I would think that with respect to the VIA Rail three days a week passenger service to Prince Rupert, that too will be one of the subjects the rail action force will be looking at. They will be empowered to examine all existing routes and proposed routes. If the Hon. Member has any points of view on that particular run, I would certainly advise him to communicate either directly with me or with the action force. Suffice to say that the mandate of the committee is to ensure that services are provided where there is a need and where the services are well supported. Judging from the comments of the Member, if there is that kind of need we will certainly look at it in a very positive way.

Regarding the other question having to do with the ferry services, that too is somewhat related to the issue raised by the Hon. Member's colleague. I will be meeting with the officials of the British Columbia government to discuss the ferry service issue in that northern region, as well as to discuss the point made by the Hon. Member for Comox-Powell River (Mr. Skelly).

On the issue of the Prince Rupert Grain Terminal, I share the Hon. Member's concern. I am deeply disturbed by the prospect of the loss of jobs. I had an opportunity to meet with members of the union during the course of the election campaign, at which time I set out to explore whether there were other ways and means by which the existing terminal could be utilized. There has been some demonstrated interest in that. I think there is a way in which that terminal might be used for non-grain services, such as specialty crops, pellets and things of that nature. I will be discussing this with some members of the provincial government, and other interested parties, with a view to attempting to maintain that facility, even on a one-shift basis, to help alleviate some of the problems affecting workers. More important, in the long term we should make sure that we do not close down a facility, something which we may regret later on.

● (1620)

The Hon. Member made the point that it is the only facility which accommodates boxcars. Clearly that is another consideration which should be taken into account. I thank him for drawing the matter to my attention. I am aware of it, and I hope I can count on his support in trying to find a solution.

Mr. Axworthy: Mr. Speaker, I have a very quick question. Before the day is over, I presume I will have an opportunity to engage in a somewhat longer discussion about some of the issues raised by the Minister. My specific question relates to the transportation agreement signed with the Province of Manitoba under the Industrial Regional Development Program which included major restoration of the Port of Church-

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ill, major development of new CN grain cars at the Transcona shops and the expansion of Winnipeg, Brandon, Churchill and The Pas airports. The package totalled some \$230 million, and it was between the province and the federal Government. It has been on hold, no action has been taken on it. It is causing a high level of uncertainty and anxiety in several parts of the province because much of its economic development is contingent upon the continuation of that program.

Would the Minister be kind enough to tell us whether he intends, as one of the Ministers responsible under this program, to continue with that agreement and the major benefits it brings to the Province of Manitoba?

Mr. Mazankowski: In answer to the Hon. Member's question, I should like to indicate that I had an opportunity to meet with the Minister of Transport for Manitoba last week. We discussed in some detail the elements of the subsidiary agreement. There are many aspects on which there is unanimous agreement. Indeed those programs will go ahead. One concerns the development of a light grain car, the rail-bus car prototype project, and there are a number of others. The provincial Minister of Transport indicated that he hoped there would be some negotiated changes in other elements of the program and that they would have to be done on a bilateral basis. We agreed to that. I am to get back to him within a week or so.

Primarily the agreement stands, subject to some modifications which will be negotiated on a bilateral basis. To suggest that the whole matter is stalled is inaccurate. We agreed to give the green light on a number of the points. I could provide the Hon. Member with that information in detail, perhaps in writing.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The period provided for questions and comments has now terminated.

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton-East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my constituents I bestow best wishes on your elevation to such a high and distinguished office in this Chamber.

The motion put by my Party is an attempt to have the Government of the day focus some of its attention on improving the economic plight of the poorer regions of Canada. This appears to be in direct contrast to what the Government is doing. It is attempting to destroy an already weak economy in the poorer regions of the country, particularly in Atlantic Canada.

The general thrust or thesis of the election campaign of the Conservative Government can best be summarized in three words—jobs, jobs and jobs. The Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) repeated this theme time and time again. In fact, he is on record as saying that tens of thousands of new jobs would be created upon the election of the Conservative Government. This theme of long-term, permanent jobs being created overnight was frequently reiterated by Members of Cabinet and indeed his entire caucus. The message was clear and unequivocal—vote Progressive Conservative and jobs, jobs and jobs will