

handle ships loading grain. I doubt if there would be more than 40 or 50 required for the handling of lumber. Therefore, the lock-out should be for what the lock-out is about, namely, the handling of containers and their contents. That is what the lock-out should be confined to.

Thank goodness the Government finally got the two sides together in Thunder Bay. Mr. Kelly banged a few heads together and made them keep sitting until they reached an agreement. I see the former Minister of Labour sitting across the way. I am beginning to wish he was still in that portfolio. I did not think I would ever say that. However, I wish he still was the Minister so he would load Mr. Kelly on the next plane to Vancouver where he could bang a few heads together, make them sit up all night until their bladders are full and finally reach an agreement.

I also want to say something about another area of concern. I am particularly distressed about what occurred during Question Period yesterday concerning the issue of deficiency payments. If there was ever an issue which is not political in its principle, it is that issue. All the political parties, all the farm organizations, all the elevator companies agree that there must be a deficiency payment so grain producers can remain reasonably competitive and viable in the face of what is being done to them by the U.S. and the EEC. It is not a political issue, it is something on which all sides agree. I submit the payment should be at least \$2 a bushel starting with number one red spring and prorated amongst other grains. The money is sent to the Canadian Wheat Board which then raises initial prices to the producer by that amount. That is the way it should be done and that is the way it is done. That applies to all grains under the jurisdiction of the Canadian Wheat Board, wheat, oats and barley. If the Government is willing to include flax, rye, canola and other specialty crops, they will get no argument from us. However, the major part of our export market is wheat, oats and barley.

That is what has to happen but what do we get? Yesterday, in response to my Leader asking whether assistance for grain producers was going to be new money or old money, the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) said:

It will be new money and good money in the pockets of the farmers.

A few minutes later the Minister of State for the Canadian Wheat Board (Mr. Mayer), in response to a question from my colleague from Regina East, said:

The money which is being talked about will be additional money for agriculture within the fiscal framework.

A few minutes after that the Minister of State for Finance (Mr. Hockin), in response to the Hon. Member for Lethbridge—Foothills (Mr. Thacker), said:

It will be a reallocation within the given fiscal framework.

What the devil will it be? Will it be new money? Will it just be within the fiscal framework? Will it be a reallocation of funds only within the Department of Agriculture, or does that include other Departments? The Government does not know what the hell it wants to do. Does it mean the Prairie Farm

Rehabilitation Act is wiped out? Do funds from that program go towards the deficiency payment? Surely that is self-defeating. Does it mean that other agricultural programs will be reduced or cancelled in order to provide a deficiency payment? Surely that is self-defeating. We need to know in the next day or two.

Since the issue of deficiency payments is not political, it can have nothing to do with an election in Saskatchewan or anywhere else. However, what is political is whether the Government is deliberately playing fast and loose with the concerns of grain producers in western Canada, indeed, the concerns of agricultural producers all over Canada, for the sake of playing some simple political game. We need to know whether the \$1 billion is for all agricultural producers across the country, because an excellent case can be made for corn producers and other agricultural producers in Ontario and Quebec. A case can be made for agricultural producers in the Atlantic provinces and the interior of British Columbia. What does it cover? Who does it cover? We cannot find out.

● (1240)

Agricultural producers in the country resent being treated as though they were a bunch of ignoramuses who can be hood-winked, fooled and handled with the utmost of cynicism. Therefore the Government must say today, and I hope it will at two o'clock, or tomorrow at the latest, what it will be, who it will be for, when it is going to happen and where and how it will get the money. I have a suggestion. Cancel half a dozen of those fighter planes, which we do not need and do not use very much anyway, and we will have the money. In any case, the Government is all over the lot on this issue and it is about time it made up its mind on what it wants to do, on how, when, and where and for whom it is being done.

I want to mention another item. I wish the Minister of Transport (Mr. Crosbie) were here. I wish him well in his new portfolio. Frankly, I do not think it is something he really wanted or is really interested in. I do not think it is something he gives a darn about. He was placed in the wrong slot. I support him in keeping the Newfoundland railway. However, if he is going to keep it, he had better do something with it. A large capital investment is required to make something out of the Newfoundland railway in order that it can serve that province properly and become viable. That will require rebuilding the road-bed, standard gauge track, straightening curves and a host of other things. If those are not done, it cannot succeed. It is designed to fail.

That brings me to the other item I want to mention, namely, the situation regarding VIA Rail. We could not get a copy of the Rail Passenger Action Force report regarding VIA Rail. Last week the consumer organization, Transport 2000, made public a copy of that task force report. When I read that in conjunction with what is called "The Last Spike" or "The Last Straw" namely, the Progressive Conservative Party task force report on rail passenger service, I begin to think it was not the Conservative Party that got elected to the Government.