

*Oral Questions***WESTERN GRAIN STABILIZATION ACT**

REQUEST FOR AMENDMENT TO EXPAND COVERAGE

Mr. Geoff Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for the Canadian Wheat Board. It concerns the Western Grain Stabilization Act. The Minister knows that roughly 18 per cent of producers are presently outside the plan and that past producer contributions have been exhausted and the plan is in deficit. Is the Minister considering opening up the Western Grain Stabilization Act in order to permit those producers presently outside the plan to get into it on less onerous terms than is presently the case?

Hon. Charles Mayer (Minister of State (Canadian Wheat Board)): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member raises a question that is of increasing concern to producers who are outside the plan, given the fact that the fund is in a substantial deficit.

There have been representations and we have been seriously considering the suggestion that the Hon. Member makes. We will take his question as representation. I also point out that we have already made an improvement to the Act which has provided for record amounts of interim payments prior to spring seeding when farmers need their assistance the most.

We will look toward making additional improvements if we believe they can assist producers.

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Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Winnipeg North Centre.

Mr. Cyril Keeper (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I must say that I am disappointed that the Minister who knew this question would be asked just left moments ago.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An Hon. Member: It is after three o'clock.

Mr. Speaker: I am sorry, but I must advise the Hon. Member that that remark was quite out of order. It is after three o'clock. We started late today. The Chair tries to be as generous as possible in Question Period. Clearly, Ministers may have to leave. However, that comment is quite inappropriate. The Hon. Member for Montreal—Sainte-Marie.

[Translation]

TRANSPORTJOB LOSSES IN INDUSTRIES RELATED TO RAILWAY
TRANSPORT—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Jean-Claude Malépart (Montreal—Sainte-Marie): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Transport. Considering that he is often off the track, I would like to remind him that the future Liberal Member for St. John's East, Mr. Neary, was here, as well as the future Liberal Member for Yukon.

My question to the Minister is this: Yesterday, in Montreal, over 500 employees of Bombardier, Canadian Steel Wheel and Laforge took part in a demonstration to ask the Conservative Government—Mr. Laberge, the Prime Minister's friend, or maybe I should say his former friend, was there—what it intends to do to put an end to the loss of jobs in railway transportation related industries. Will the Minister be satisfied with watching the parade go by or will he take concrete action to save jobs in Canada?

[English]

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, the workers whom the Hon. Member is talking about work for Bombardier. I hope they will be as competitive as possible and will get as much work as possible in Canada or elsewhere. Naturally, we will do anything we can to assist Bombardier in achieving that purpose.

[Translation]

MEASURES TO BE TAKEN SO THAT BOMBARDIER EMPLOYEES DO
NOT LOSE JOBS

Mr. Jean-Claude Malépart (Montreal—Sainte-Marie): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the President of the Treasury Board.

The Minister told us that there is nothing he can do to help Bombardier, and the President of the Treasury Board has spent a lot of money. There has been the Picard Report, and a whole series of reports, but there are no jobs.

In view of the fact that his colleague has contradicted him, could the Minister indicate what concrete action he can take to prevent Bombardier employees from losing their jobs in September? Will he take action, in view of the Minister of Transport's refusal to do so?

Hon. Robert de Cotret (President of Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, I would simply like to indicate to my hon. friend that the Commission set up under the chairmanship of Mr. Picard was completely voluntary and did not cost a cent, except for the translation of the final report. I wish to emphasize the contribution of the Montrealers who devoted their time and energy to make quite valuable recommendations to the Government to alleviate the economic ills of the Greater Montreal region.