

**Mr. Broadbent:** Why didn't you ask them?

**Mr. Keeper:** Would the Minister consider speaking to the President of Canada Post and asking him to understand that he must have co-operative relations with his workers if he is going to be able to deliver the mail, and to rescind the provocative action?

**Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Revenue):** Mr. Speaker, I have already talked to the President of Canada Post and I have indicated to him, as I indicate to the Hon. Member, that I expect both sides to obey the law. There is no question about that. The Corporation and the union are before the Canada Labour Relations Board which will look at the whole issue of whether the contract has been met.

The Hon. Member may automatically take the side of the union in a case where service is being denied to the people of Canada. I am on the side of the people of Canada. I say they are paying for the service, and I say they are entitled to receive it.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

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#### AGRICULTURE

##### MARITIME FARMERS' COUNCIL—REQUEST FOR FEED FREIGHT ASSISTANCE

**Mr. Pat Nowlan (Annapolis Valley-Hants):** Mr. Speaker, I am awfully glad you recognized me today since I married a Californian, and in honour of our visiting Californians I am happy to have the floor. I would like to go now from the California coast to the East Coast and direct my question to the Minister of Agriculture or, perhaps more important, to the Minister of Finance. When will one of those Ministers get off their duff and give an answer to the Maritime Farmers' Council on its legitimate, constructive, and positive request for funds for feed freight assistance in an emergency situation?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. John Wise (Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, that was an excellent question—

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Wise:**—and it was put in an excellent way. There is no question about that. It is a serious question, and I want to respond to it seriously. The Hon. Member knows that I am looking at the request made to us by the Maritime Farmers' Council. I have received representations previously from the Hon. Member. I have also received representations from Cabinet colleagues and other caucus colleagues. I want to indicate to the Hon. Member that my colleague in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board is presently carrying on a review of feed grain policy. It is an integral part of that study. Indeed, the first group my colleague met with regarding the study was the Maritime Farmers' Council.

#### Oral Questions

[Translation]

#### FINANCE

##### EQUALIZATION PAYMENTS—INQUIRY WHY GOVERNMENT REFUSED QUEBEC SETTLEMENT OFFER

**Mr. Jean-Claude Malépart (Montreal-Sainte-Marie):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance.

The Minister is aware that his decision to grant only \$110 million in supplementary equalization payments to Quebec was a great disappointment to the Premier of Quebec, while the Quebec Minister of Finance, Mr. Duhaime, declared in the National Assembly yesterday that he thought this unilateral and politically motivated decision to grant only \$110 million to Quebec was most unfair.

Could the Minister inform the House why he refused the settlement offer made by the Government of Quebec which, since it was expecting a shortfall of \$750 million over the next two years, suggested a settlement of \$450 million, in other words, \$300 million this year and \$150 million next year?

[English]

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, first let me remind the Hon. Member that the \$700 million referred to by the Finance Minister of Quebec is the \$700 million that Quebec would have received had not the previous Government put in place the 1982 formula, which is clearly hurting the Province of Quebec as well as the Provinces of Manitoba and Nova Scotia.

I suggest the Hon. Member speak to the previous Minister of Finance.

**Mr. Gauthier:** Who is in power?

**Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre):** I will tell the Hon. Member about the present arrangement we have put forward. This is in negotiation. I do not think that Mr. Duhaime or Mr. Levesque expected to get everything they asked for, nor, in view of our own financial position, are we in a position to do that. So we have gone half-way. We had no legal obligation to do anything, but we have gone half-way to recognize its position, and we say, please recognize our position. We have a \$35 billion deficit.

[Translation]

##### QUEBEC FINANCE MINISTER'S OFFER TO MEET FEDERAL MINISTER

**Mr. Jean-Claude Malépart (Montreal-Sainte-Marie):** Mr. Speaker, Quebecers are starting to wonder why the deficit is mentioned when Quebec needs something, but is conveniently forgotten in the case of multinational oil companies.

I would like to know whether the Minister is willing to accept the offer made by the Quebec Minister of Finance to meet with the Minister before he brings down his Budget, in order to renegotiate this agreement and ensure that Quebec gets its fair share.