

determined by the strength of the province's resource-based industries and our ability to compete in an increasingly competitive international market-place. The current strike in the forest sector, unfavourable U.S. protectionist policies, and an inadequate competitive response could dampen the province's prospects for the coming year.

Regional wage settlements reported by Labour Canada showed that the average annual increase in base rates for Ontario in 1985 was 4.9 per cent and 2 per cent for the West. The figures for British Columbia are the lowest of the four western provinces for the second quarter of 1986 at 1.8 per cent. For the same period, Ontario settlements reached 4.5 per cent. These differences reflect the varying economic environments in our country. Regional disparities have to be dealt with. This area is a clear indication of where we have to become competitive in Vancouver. The port has to become competitive, and all industries have to become more competitive. As a federal Government we have shown the initiative and the intent to deal with these regional disparities. I bring this point forward at this time because I think it is of prime importance to all Canadians, especially to British Columbians.

Uninterrupted operation of the ports and stable industrial relations are imperative for the continued movement of our western grain and resource-based products. Enterprises and producers facing an increasingly competitive world need to operate in a more predictable and efficient environment. The problem areas in the country are based upon our resource-based industries and our commodity items. We have to diversify but we cannot lose those traditional markets in these areas. The protection of existing jobs and expansion of our markets depend upon our response to present challenges.

It is vital that we all take seriously the responsibility we have to ensure that the British Columbia economy reaches its potential. New investment, expansion of our markets, increased efficiency, growth in personal income, expansion in employment opportunities and reduced unemployment are best fostered in a positive and predictable industrial relations environment.

The Bill before the House orders the resumption of longshoring and related operations in the West Coast ports. With the exception of the container handling issue, the longshoremen are to return to work under the terms contained in the report of the Conciliation Commissioner, Dalton Larson. I am confident that the proposed Industrial Inquiry Commission on the container handling issue will resolve this serious problem and provide the ports of British Columbia with the necessary stability to fulfil their key role in the province's crucial transportation infrastructure. The local economy, the province, the nation and the disputing parties will, I believe, all be the beneficiaries of this particular resolve.

● (1805)

Again, I compliment the Minister of Labour for his leadership and his compassion in dealing with labour and management. Let us be on record as saying that we understand

that this is a lock-out. It is an initiative taken by management, not by labour, but it has to be resolved to the satisfaction of both parties.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Before we go into the adjournment debate, I would like to advise the Hon. Member that he has 10 minutes on questions and comments when Orders of the Day are called tomorrow.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 66 deemed to have been moved.

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS—USE OF LOW SULPHUR COAL

Mr. Gordon Taylor (Bow River): Mr. Speaker, on October 15, 1986, I asked the Minister of the Environment (Mr. McMillan) the following question:

When may we expect a decision on the use of Canadian low sulphur coal in Canada?

The Minister replied with the following answer:

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of State for Mines, the Minister of Transport and myself are trying to formulate a decision or response to the task force report which was released on August 20, 1986. I hope that we will be able to make some sort of preliminary decision on the whole question of displacing American high sulphur content coal with low sulphur content coal from western Canada before very long, perhaps before the end of the year.

On the same day, my colleague, the Hon. Member for Crowfoot (Mr. Malone), asked the Minister of the Environment the following question:

Bearing in mind the Government's interest in environmental protection, improvement for the western economy, and the enhancement of Canada's balance of payments, what action is the Minister undertaking to encourage the use of low sulphur coal in the industrial heartland of Canada?

The Minister said that it did not make sense for the Government of Canada and the country as a whole to be encouraging the importation of high sulphur content coal from the United States when low sulphur content coal is available from western Canada with all of the attendant environmental and economic advantages inherent in displacing American coal. He then said:

—to the extent that the federal Government can do anything about the problem, we are acting on it.

Let us note the following major relevant points as confirmed in the report referred to by the Minister: first, western coal has one-half of 1 per cent sulphur content whereas U.S. coal has 5 per cent sulphur content. The \$7 million the federal Government is now providing to clean up the acid rain mess in Ontario could have helped to haul hundreds of tonnes of western coal from Alberta to Ontario and we would not be in this terrible acid rain mess. Second, the Government of Ontario has made a commitment to reduce acid rain in that province by 50 per cent of the 1980 emission levels by 1994.