

*Grain Shipments*

one of the most important commodity operations in this country and the world.

I think two of the strongest speeches made tonight about the failures of the government were made by the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Goodale) and the hon. member for Battleford-Kindersley (Mr. McIsaac). Let me just repeat what the hon. member for Assiniboia said. He said that he thought there ought to be a national conference or gathering to bring together the people concerned in all aspects of the grain trade.

I think we can expand that far beyond the grain trade in terms of labour relations. We can expand it into other areas of commerce and industry that are important to this country, and upon which we depend. I congratulate him for saying that, because the government that he supports, which has been in office since 1963, and which goes to the opposition for alternatives without producing any itself, has had the opportunity to take the kind of action he suggests, but not once has it done so.

The hon. member for Battleford-Kindersley also made a fine speech. He recognized the difficulty his own party has placed him in so far as his constituents and his province are concerned. In his eloquent way he made the same condemnation of lack of action by the government since it came to office in 1963.

In addition to speaking in the House of Commons for the record, I should also like these two members to go to caucus next Wednesday and speak to their colleagues in exactly the same terms. The hon. member for Skeena (Mrs. Campagnolo), I thought, made a very forceful speech, and perhaps put the situation best of all in terms of breadth when she talked about other industries. I should like her to go to the Liberal caucus next week and make the same speech. I should like her to make the absent members from the treasury benches tonight, and the 100 odd absent members of the government, listen to her. I assume that if they do not come to the House for important debates they must at least attend caucus, so I think those speeches should be made there as well.

I listened very carefully to the Minister of Justice (Mr. Lang) and the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Chretien) who spoke tonight, and waited for some of the alternatives which they have asked of the opposition. But why do they not produce alternatives during the course of the debate? The people of Canada gave this government a mandate on July 8. I do not begrudge it the mandate, though I wish it were otherwise. But they did not give the government a mandate to ask the opposition what to do about the problems of this country; the people of Canada were looking to the government to lead and to offer alternatives; they looked to the government to heal the wounds, to give leadership and to inspire Canadians.

Unfortunately the government has a majority but is in relative shambles. If there is one place where we are going to witness lack of leadership in Canada in 1975 and 1976, it is in the very vexing field of employer-employee relations. I do not want to speak about the general labour market, but I do want to say something about the public service of this country. I respect the right to strike, though I hope it will always be used in a responsible way. But I also think we should look to the national interest from time to time and, as the President of the Treasury Board said, there is a

time for judgment. He said that in his opinion the time for judgment with respect to the grain trade had not come.

I say to him that he was wrong, that he exercised that judgment improperly. That is not to say that the issue is not important. The farmers and the people who depend on the grain trade decided a long time ago that the matter was in the national interest.

The minister asked for alternatives, and I should like to tell him about what I would like to see in regard to public service bargaining. I should like to see a widening of bargaining rights in this country, of the fields in which public servants can bargain, and of the matters about which they can bargain. It is important to establish, or perhaps re-establish, good faith in the public service between employers and employees. That was the purpose of the Finkelman report, but I do not think that is in existence. If the government members of that commission were to move in that direction, then I think we would be opening the door to the beginning of industrial peace and trust in this country.

● (0110)

The second thing we ought to do is re-establish the pay research bureau. It was a very good thing and it could take an independent look at pay structures and the whole matter of comparability. All the evidence placed before that bureau ought to be laid on the table so that all parties, including the public, could see what the case is. This is not the case now. If anything came out of the Finkelman report, it is the fact that this has not been done but ought to be done.

I think we have to take a hard look at the whole concept of industrial democracy in the private sector so that trust can be built up and perhaps transcend itself—if that is the correct phrase—into the public sector. We ought to strive for that in the committee. Government members, particularly, ought not to limit the debate, limit the thrust of that committee or dampen down the areas we can discuss but should, rather, widen them so we can build into the public service side the real, consultative procedures which are not now there. The rudiments are there, but in terms of good, sound consultative procedures they are not there.

We ought to explore the whole question of a public interest disputes commission. Part of the problem in respect of labour relations in Canada, in the public or private sector, is that there is no machinery anywhere to examine a contract while it is in force or to deal with problems that arise from time to time while a contract is running and isolate the problems before the contract expires. In this way negotiation would be limited and the beds sores that come during a period of conflict would be eliminated. We need that kind of consultative procedure in this country. We also need bargaining procedures in both the public and private sectors. We need bargaining procedures that are swift and responsive so the frustrations that come in the course of time do not build up and attitudes do not harden. The minister asked for some suggestions, and those are a few I offer in the short time I have to deal with this matter.

I am a little concerned about what the Minister of Justice (Mr. Lang) has said. I thought one aspect of his speech set a very high tone in respect of what we look for