

Mr. McKenzie: The news headlines describing what is going on make a laughing stock out of us. I will read one or two: "West Coast Ports Hit Again", "Strike Effects Go Very Deep", "West Ports Hit By Prevailing Labour Gales". Here is another: "Strikes Force Wheat Board to Discourage Grain Planting".

Mr. Goodale: That is untrue. The Board never said that.

Mr. McKenzie: All right. I suggest you challenge the Wheat Board then.

Mr. Goodale: I checked today. What you have just said is untrue.

Mr. McKenzie: Well then you should bring in a correction.

Mr. Towers: How much wheat have you raised?

Mr. McKenzie: I will read the statement. *The Financial Post* reported on March 15 that the Canadian Wheat Board told farmers to ignore former promises that the Board can sell everything they plant in the current crop year. If that statement is incorrect, the government should put out a statement in correction of it.

We are always being told by members on the government side that the opposition has nothing concrete to offer. I should like to read the suggestions we put forward during the last election.

For several years Canadians, we said, have watched with growing concern and disappointment the emergence of four areas of colossal policy failure by the government with respect to the world of work. These failures have caused much unnecessary personal anxiety for thousands of working men and women, have generated widespread frustration and anger, and have stirred considerable social unrest. That is the understatement of the century.

Perhaps the most glaring failure has been the failure to provide adequate job opportunities for those who want and need employment. The inability of the economy to absorb as active members of the labour force the large numbers of young people graduating from our high schools, universities and technical schools is one example. Another is the inability of ordinary Canadians in most parts of the country to get jobs when they want them.

One glaring example of policy failure by the government relates to somewhat questionable approaches to collective bargaining nurtured over the last several years. The strike and lock-out remain by and large legitimate and necessary tools for the effective functioning of the collective bargaining process and for meaningful labour management relations, but there are numerous cases where both parties, as well as the public in general, have been the losers.

I do not have the time to cover all of these areas but I will outline the major ones. We would see that the rights of members of unions to receive audited financial statements are guaranteed by law. We would review the law relating to the abuse of positions of trust with a view to reinforcing the safeguards. The Progressive Conservative Party feels it is desirable, wherever possible, to promote more unity, co-operation and commonality of interest between labour and management. We advocate efforts to

Grain Shipments

promote the diffusion of ownership among workers and salaried employees of Canadian companies. We do not believe in confrontation. We believe in constant consultation and this is what has been lacking.

The Progressive Conservative Party would consult with labour and management organizations to formulate a comprehensive strategy toward this end. Such strategy might include responsible tax incentives for profit-sharing schemes, worker participation in plant management, and employee stock ownership financing which would help spread ownership among most or all of the employees.

Also, the Conservative Party favours more regular review of federal labour legislation relating to minimum wages and hours of work. The object must be to ensure that these are at all times sufficiently in the interest of the working man or woman. A Progressive Conservative government would also establish an independent national human rights commission. The function of this commission would be to deal with the whole range of individual rights in every field under the jurisdiction of the federal government, including the federal public service. Also, we must consider safeguarding the public interest. Experience in recent years has shown that there are certain key industries and certain aspects of particular services where the use of a strike or lock-out has made the public a pawn in labour-management differences. This is what concerns the Canadian public.

Being critical of the Liberal government is the easiest thing, I find, since I came down here. I hope tonight I have shown that it is equally possible to put forward constructive suggestions, because the government has proved itself to be bankrupt of ideas. It does not know what to do and it is asking us to come forward with suggestions. I have offered a few and I hope they will be heeded.

Mr. Goodale: On a point of order, the hon. member made extensive reference to a newspaper report which allegedly said the Wheat Board had suggested that as a result of this dispute production was to be discouraged. If the hon. member would check the source, he would find—

Some hon. Members: Order!

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): That is not a point of order. It is a point of debate.

● (0100)

Mr. Walter Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Madam Speaker, first I want to congratulate my colleague the hon. member for Vancouver South (Mr. Fraser), for introducing this very important matter. The parameters of the problem to which we are addressing ourselves tonight were set forth in terms of the number of ships that were waiting to load grain, the number of shipping days that were lost, the back shipments that are overdue, as well as in terms of our credibility with our customers. These countries have purchased one million tons of grain, and they will think twice about further purchases of grain from this country.

I do not think there is really any doubt in the mind of any member of the House that what we are dealing with is truly in the national interest, not only in relation to grain but in terms of the continued operation and good faith of