

in written form are best kept confidential for the moment. I will inform the House of whatever further action we intend to take on the Devco issue as soon as possible.

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## AGRICULTURE

### ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY LABOUR DISPUTES—EFFECT ON WHEAT EXPORTS

**Mr. Geoff Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport who will know that western grain farmers are watching anxiously the three labour disputes which have the potential to tie up the St. Lawrence Seaway and thereby disrupt the flow of grain from western Canada to export markets. My question for the Minister is this. Since Canada's reputation as a supplier of high quality wheat is again at stake, can the Minister advise the House as to whether the continued flow of that prairie wheat to export can be assured?

**Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, with reference to the situation, there is a strike at the moment, as the Hon. Member knows. It is occurring between the Canadian Marine Officers' Union, which is the marine engineers, and the Canadian Great Lakes shipowners. I am assured that to date there has been no interruption at all in the delivery of grain through the system. That is the present position. We are watching it very closely. The Minister of Labour is watching the situation.

There are two other potential disputes, and both are in the conciliation process. As at the present time, grain is moving in the normal manner without disruption. However, if there are any serious disruptions, the Hon. Member can be assured that we will take action to protect the Canadian farmer.

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## APARTHEID

### SOUTH AFRICA—VISIT BY BRITISH TRADE MISSION

**Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—Walkerville):** Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. It was reported this morning that a British trade mission is on its way to South Africa with British government support. My question to the Secretary of State is this. What action does the Government intend to take in response to this act of utter contempt for the will of the Commonwealth and the already weak sanctions imposed by it, largely as a result of the involvement of the British in weakening its resolve? Does the Government intend to protest this action as it should be protested?

## Oral Questions

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, no, I do not intend to protest the action because it is an action that is within the sovereign discretion of Great Britain. I have had extensive discussions, and the Hon. Member in his relations has had extensive discussions, with representatives of the British Parliament, and some members of the British Government. There is a different view on the effect of sanctions, and that difference is well known. They have a policy that differs from Canada's.

I guess what is most germane is how we can work together to ensure that the Commonwealth Conference, which opens in a couple of weeks in Vancouver, is a conference whose result will be to increase the pressures for change upon the Government of South Africa. That is what I am dedicated to doing.

Frankly, I do not think that we would advance our ability to do that by launching a condemnation of one of the principal members of the Commonwealth two weeks before the conference convenes.

### REQUEST FOR COMMONWEALTH ACTION

**Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—Walkerville):** My question to the Secretary of State is this. Is it not about time that we stopped kowtowing to the British inclination to collusion with South Africa and go to the Commonwealth, exercising leadership to get from the Commonwealth, even if without the British, the kind of action in response to that apartheid-type regime that that civilized country and a civilized Commonwealth ought to be providing?

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, what is most important is for us to exert the maximum possible world pressure upon the South African regime to change the system of apartheid. That is what we have been doing consistently before the Nassau declaration, and with some effect.

The Hon. Member suggests that the Commonwealth should throw its weight absent Great Britain against South Africa. He knows that the Commonwealth economic weight absent Great Britain is absent a great deal. What would be most productive for us to do would be to find ways in which we can continue to work on the British to change their views about sanctions, but can also continue to work with them in areas where there is agreement to increase both the pressure for change on the South African Government and to increase the stability and security of the front-line states.

It is also, I think, possible for us to look at ways, with Britain and with other industrial countries that are not members of the Commonwealth, in which we can continue to add to pressures upon South Africa. That is the purpose of the policy of this Government.