

to get on with the job of bringing in a new national transportation act. Canada must not be allowed to enter the next decade with a transportation system based on the last one.

**Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, I am always amazed when the Tories rise to talk about problems in transportation. They resort to so many obvious falsehoods and distortions in approaching the question that their credibility surely must fail altogether.

● (1550)

In his preliminary remarks, the hon. member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski) talked about our having passed only two substantive measures through the House, although he admitted there was a third to which he wasn't paying attention because he thought it had some pre-history. In that case, I guess we should get some credit for the nine or so measures on the order paper which have not been proceeded with because of the amount of time members of the Tory party insist on spending on whatever subject comes up, making speech after speech. And then, yesterday, they resorted to the childish tactic of adjourning the House, stopping the business of the House altogether. That is the kind of conduct which has gone on in delaying legislation time after time.

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

**Mr. Lang:** The hon. member was stating a complete untruth in referring to any intention of mine in relation to the committee and the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Goodale) as chairman of it. I guess he resorted to that tactic for his own reasons. He was completely wrong in implying there was any lack of consultation between me and my officials, my staff, the users and the transportation industry. Indeed, I would venture to say that almost every organization involved with transportation wishing to have direct access to me or wishing to contact officials in Transport Canada has found that they can do so. Over the last three and a half years almost every one of them would tell you, Mr. Speaker, that they have had more consultation than ever before and are satisfied with the degree to which we try to take account of their views before moving on a particular transportation issue.

The hon. member was also completely wrong—it was absolute distortion—in saying I fought tooth and nail against a grain summit with the western premiers. Indeed, when the suggestion appeared at the first ministers' conference I replied immediately that I thought it was a good idea. When Premier Lyon wired and suggested a date in January which was not possible for me, I replied suggesting a date in December for that conference and I attended it with delight. I was delighted at the results because at that conference the premiers, in the presence of the leading members of the grain handling and transportation system, saw that essentially all the things that needed to be done in connection with our transport and handling of grain could be done, including the selling of it, and that we could realistically set a target for export of 30 million tons for 1985, a target at which the hon. member for Vegreville had long scoffed when I suggested we should build for a

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billion bushels of export. Well, we are now talking about a higher target than that.

At that conference one of the things we all recognized was that if we were to achieve these new levels of exports—50 per cent higher than current record or near-record levels—one of the key things was to continue the encouragement of production of wheat, barley and particularly rapeseed in the prairies, and that all of us had to talk together about the possibility and prospect for this in order that farmers would agree to use the fertilizers and chemical sprays which can allow such production to occur.

One of the reasons, we do not have more capacity for exporting grain today is that it took so long to persuade even the elevator companies involved in terminal construction to go ahead with expansion in Vancouver where it was seen to be most needed, although I immediately emphasize for those interested in the movement of grain through the Thunder Bay area that we foresee increases there as well. It is simply that the increases out of Vancouver and out of Prince Rupert are of an order of magnitude so much greater.

Hon. members might note that the actual construction of additional facilities by the elevator companies, including even the farmer-owned companies, did not come about until we had put in place, through the Canadian Wheat Board, incentives to encourage them to go ahead. That was because they were concerned as to whether production would keep up with exports. What hon. members who are not from the prairies may fail to recognize is that we are exporting record volumes and only have the extra grain on hand because we have had absolutely record crops over the last three years, and that in many previous years we exported more grain than we were actually producing. That is a fact that is very important in our over-all approach to the problem of transportation.

I suppose where the hon. member is most amazing is in his ability to stand as a transportation critic and say that he thinks we did not do right in not developing a comprehensive policy on transportation. I was amazed the other day to find that he and his colleague from Winnipeg South Centre (Mr. McKenzie) failed to know how open our department was with thousands and thousands of documents available for inspection. He, as critic for transportation, missed this very important fact which should have been fundamental to his work, and now I find he does not know there stands a full statement of policy on transportation from 1975, a statement which is comprehensive and which meets the needs of today as well as it did at that time. And our actions reflect the practical application of that policy.

He ended up with some pious principles, many of which reflect ideas which are contained in far more elaborate form in our own statement of policy. And there is another thing he has failed to understand. He appears to say we should have amended the National Transportation Act. Mr. Speaker, we have before this House, as we did earlier, a bill to amend the National Transportation Act, and let it be understood that in a previous parliament when that act was before us the Conserva-