

*Government Orders*

year with \$135 million. In the manufacturing and processing tax credit alone we piss away a billion bucks.

On the lifetime capital gains exemption this year we are going to lose \$1.7 billion, more than 20 times what it would take to grant that 3 per cent raise. For every dollar spent auditing corporate tax returns Revenue Canada recovers \$17. For an investment of \$9 million in audits we could recoup that \$9 million we spend and pay for an entire 3 per cent raise. If we wanted to drop \$35 million on extra corporate tax audits, we could give every public servant in this country a 5 per cent raise and still have some money left over.

The fact of the matter is that like most of the other economic policies of this government, this bill incorporates a gross inequity and an absolute attack on the people of this country that can least afford it in the interest of the people who least need it.

The proof of that is in the text of the bill itself, and I quote: "This act does not apply to persons engaged as independent contractors", the bill which now already exceeds at \$5 billion the total wage bill for Treasury Board employees of \$4.8 billion. We are exempting them. We are saying: "Keep rolling high. Keep charging us whatever you want. The sky is the limit. We have the money".

"The Treasury Board may change any terms and conditions of a compensation plan". That is what you get paid in an ordinary person's language. "That is extended under this bill if those terms and conditions are in the opinion of Treasury Board in respect of a conversion or reclassification that is required to implement a new or revised classification standard". In other words, all Treasury Board has to do is wave its magic classification wand and whoever it waves it over is exempted from the provisions of the bill and can get any increase Treasury Board thinks is mighty fine for them.

• (2150)

The nonsense, the prattle or the gibberish we have been treated to at the hands of this government and its backbenches for the last two days is just that. It has nothing to do with the real purpose of the bill. The real purpose of the bill is borne out in the experience of the Canadian people which for the overwhelming majority is

tough times and for the privileged few is good times that continue to roll. It is grossly unfair and it ought to be defeated.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**Hon. Charles Mayer (Minister of Western Economic Diversification and Minister of State (Grains and Oilseeds)):** Madam Speaker, I would like to take the opportunity in the time available to talk about, if I can, how this strike is affecting a group of people in the country who are under some pretty severe economic conditions themselves, namely the farmers of Canada.

What I want to talk about specifically, if I can, is the Canadian Grain Commission. The Canadian Grain Commission is an institution in this country that is almost 80 years old. It is responsible for the weighing, grading, and setting dockage, which is foreign material in grain, of the grain we consume domestically and of the grain that we trade.

The grain that we trade is very important because when you look at wheat, for instance, 80 per cent of the wheat that we produce is exported. We are very dependent upon exports as far as wheat is concerned. With other grains it is similar. Half the barley we produce is exported. Something like three-quarters of the canola is exported. That market then is very important to us.

The Canadian Grain Commission plays a considerable complementary role in seeing that we export. It has developed a reputation over its life—and as I said it is almost 80 years old—of being one of the best if not the best institution of its kind in the world. When Canada goes to sell we can compete on price. We can compete on reliability of being able to deliver, and I want to say something about that before I conclude.

We can also compete on the quality and the type of product that we sell. There we shine. We do very well. The Canadian Grain Commission, and not a lot of people realize this, is basically funded by producers. It has something like 850 employees. Its head office is in Winnipeg but it operates literally from coast to coast in Sorel, Baie Comeau, Port Cartier, Montreal, Quebec. It also operates out of Thunder Bay and on the west coast and in Churchill.