

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, I would advise the hon. member that, of course, the possibility of personal intervention of the Minister of Labour in an incident like this is always there. Just when that should take place, and when it would be required, I think is a question for the government to decide. In the meantime, the services of some very experienced mediators of my department are going to be available on a continuing basis to the parties to try to bring them together and get a settlement of this dispute.

**DISPUTE WITH NON-OPERATING RAILWAY EMPLOYEES—ALLEGED REFUSAL OF COMPANIES TO APPOINT EXPERT TO STUDY VALUE OF PENSION—GOVERNMENT ACTION**

**Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Labour. In view of the fact that one of the major difficulties in reaching agreement was the differences of opinion between the representatives of the union and the company as to the value of the pension which had been agreed upon, is the minister giving consideration to the proposal made to the conciliation board by the union representatives that an impartial expert in the field of pensions be asked to study the pension proposal so that he could arrive at a figure showing the actual value in terms of a percentage of the total wages which the pension agreement gave to the workers?

**Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, that general suggestion is worthy of consideration, and we are giving it that consideration.

**Mr. Orlikow:** A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In view of the fact that the companies represented on the conciliation board and the chairman of the conciliation board refused to consider this proposal by the union—a proposal incidentally which the union said it would have been prepared to accept regardless of what the arbitrator found—would the minister give consideration to the government making such an appointment?

**Mr. Munro (Hamilton East):** Mr. Speaker, I said "general" advisedly. Whether we look at it in the precise terms suggested by the union representative is open to question, or whether we get some impartial person or body to have a look at this whole question is very much in our minds at the present time. I cannot go further than that.

**DISPUTE WITH NON-OPERATING RAILWAY EMPLOYEES—CONTINGENCY PLAN TO TRANSPORT GRAIN IN EVENT OF STRIKE**

**Mr. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a supplementary question to the Minister of Labour. Has he had any discussions with the minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board to develop some contingency plans in the event of rotating strikes to ensure that the movement of grain is not impaired over the summer months?

**Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour):** It is very much in the minds of the government generally, Mr. Speaker, and of the minister responsible for the Wheat

[Mr. McGrath.]

Board. In terms of specifics, or what these arrangements would be in that eventuality, I think questions along those lines should be more appropriately directed to the minister responsible.

**POSSIBLE ESTABLISHMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES COMMISSION—GOVERNMENT POSITION**

**Mr. Harvie Andre (Calgary Centre):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Labour. Since, in the face of another potential railway strike in Canada, the government again has no definite proposals to avoid a strike and no definite plans and policies to deal with a possible strike, is the government—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member knows he cannot preface a question by a preamble such as this. The hon. member is making a statement. It should be possible for hon. members to ask questions without putting preambles, prefaces and allegations ahead of their questions. The hon. member is recognized for the purpose of asking his question.

**Mr. Andre:** Mr. Speaker, is the government now going to prepare legislation to establish the industrial disputes commission, to assist in those areas where essential services are concerned?

**Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, if we were satisfied that this formulation would in any way avoid situations such as we are facing at present, of course we would. But, as Minister of Labour, I am not entirely satisfied that it would make that type of contribution.

**An hon. Member:** A supplementary question—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I see a number of hon. members, including the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre and the hon. member for Regina-Lake Centre, who wish to ask supplementaries. Perhaps we might return to them in a moment after we have completed the first round of questioning. To that end I will recognize the hon. member for York South, followed by the hon. member for Témiscamingue.

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**AGRICULTURE**

**INQUIRY AS TO POSSIBLE PROPOSALS TO WESTERN ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES CONFERENCE TO INCREASE FOOD PRODUCTION**

**Mr. David Lewis (York South):** Mr. Speaker, I want to direct a question to the Acting Prime Minister arising out of one of the papers for the western economic opportunities conference tabled yesterday by the Prime Minister. I do not know whether the Acting Prime Minister has been involved in this exercise. One of the papers emphasizes the need for expanding agricultural production. I want to ask the Acting Prime Minister whether the government will present to the western premiers at this conference concrete proposals to encourage farmers to increase the supply of food products for Canadians, which would help