

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

fist at every country which, like Gabon, is totally unimpressed by its uncompromising arrogance?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. This is an argument rather than a question.

[English]

**Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena):** Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether I could direct a question to the Minister of Transport relating to that section of his department which deals with meteorological matters. I ask the minister whether he might be able to arrange that March 22 be a fine, clear and sunny day.

**Mr. J. R. Keays (Gaspé):** Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development who is responsible to parliament for the historic sites commission. With reference to the importation of potatoes from the United States to Canada, would the minister give consideration to the construction of a hothouse at Cap Rouge, Quebec, to commemorate the planting of the first potatoes on Canadian soil?

**FINANCE****ACTION TO CURTAIL INCREASES  
IN INTEREST RATES**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. A. D. Hales (Wellington South):** I wish to direct my question to the Prime Minister, Mr. Speaker. Considering the number of complaints that I and many other members of the house, no doubt, have received concerning the sharp increase in interest rates now being charged by all lending institutions, may I ask what the government proposes to do to curtail these increases in interest rates?

**Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, we shall be discussing the finance estimates again shortly, I hope.

**Mr. Hales:** A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Would the Prime Minister consider referring this very serious matter to the committee on finance, trade and economic affairs?

**Mr. Pearson:** I should think, Mr. Speaker, that should the committee feel it would be useful to look into this matter, it would take that action.

[Mr. Simard.]

[Translation]

**LABOUR RELATIONS****MONTREAL—APPOINTMENT OF ARBITRATION  
BOARD ON PICARD REPORT**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. Roger-E. Régimbal (Argenteuil-Deux-Montagnes):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Minister of Transport.

In view of the imminent danger of a complete paralysis in the Montreal port which could affect its activities for a long time and the possibility that the house will adjourn soon, does the government intend to take immediately, with all its resources and authority, some steps liable to solve the labour-management conflict delaying the settlement of that collective agreement?

[English]

**Hon. Paul Hellyer (Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, considerable effort is being made to see there is no strike. I think the hon. member should refer this question to the Minister of Labour, who has the primary responsibility in the matter.

**Mr. Régimbal:** May I direct my question to the Minister of Labour. At least one minister believes he knows what he is talking about.

**Hon. J. R. Nicholson (Minister of Labour):** Would the hon. member please repeat the question? I did not hear the first part of it.

**Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton South):** Are you the Minister of Labour?

**Mr. Régimbal:** In view of the imminent danger of the complete paralysis of the port of Montreal, which would affect the activities of the port for a long time to come, and since there is a possibility that the house will adjourn soon, will the minister initiate immediately with all the resources and authority at his command any proposal to find a solution to labour-management troubles in that port?

**Mr. Nicholson:** Some days ago, in answering a question put by an hon. member, I think I said that if the two representatives, that of the longshoremen and that of the shipping federation on the conciliation board requested, were not able to agree on a chairman, I would be glad to appoint one. When a report was received by me on Thursday last from the representatives of the longshoremen and the shipping federation that they had not