

*Oral Questions*

freight and passenger services have been cut, and 100 per cent between Toronto and Montreal, if the minister will give us the current status of the walkout and whether any consideration has been given to the request of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers for an extra 15 per cent?

**Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, my advice is that as a result of legal action being taken by the CNR, perhaps as well as the enlightened self-interest of the engineers themselves, many are returning to work. The St. Lawrence region is in full operation and a good deal of the prairie region is in full operation. I am told there are still some work stoppages and meetings are going on today. I am hopeful that the engineers, in their own best interests and the interests of all fellow railway workers, will return to work immediately.

**Mr. Ellis:** Mr. Speaker, a point of order, since I am not going to get an answer to the question. As of 60 minutes ago in the largest area in the St. Lawrence region, the Rideau area with headquarters in my home city of Belleville, there was not a single engineer reporting back to work. I am very anxious to have the minister look into the matter to see if he cannot get some of them back to work.

**Mr. Munro (Hamilton East):** I certainly will, Mr. Speaker, but I am speaking from information received in the last two hours. I will check into it.

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**GRAIN****EFFECT OF RAILWAY ENGINEERS' STRIKE ON SHIPMENTS—  
GOVERNMENT ACTION TO ALLEVIATE**

**Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West):** Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question for the minister responsible for the Wheat Board. In light of the answer just given by the Minister of Labour I wonder if this minister could advise whether grain shipments are being adversely affected and if so, what method he is going to introduce to see that shipments of grain supplies do not suffer?

**Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Justice):** Mr. Speaker, to the extent that grain is moved by rail in the winter period—and there is a significant movement—it is of course affected in the same way as other traffic. The solution to the problem of moving it is the same as the solution to the problem generally.

**Mr. Alexander:** A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that answer, but in light of the fact that the movement of grain is adversely affected I want to know what the alternatives are, and what the government's thinking is with respect to ensuring that our international reputation is not affected as it was by the position we took with respect to the grain handlers strike. All I want to know is what the alternatives are, and what the government's thinking is.

**Mr. Lang:** Mr. Speaker, the only satisfactory alternative to avoiding a slowdown in the movement of grain is for those rail operations to commence again and continue

[Mr. Ellis.]

unimpaired. There is, of course, a relatively small volume of grain moved by rail to the east for export purposes, but the movement to the west is significant.

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**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS****ALLEGED INTENTION OF UNITED STATES TO USE  
SUPERTANKERS IN ARCTIC—GOVERNMENT POSITION**

**Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. I should like to ask the minister if he can shed any light on the government's thinking and planning with respect to newspaper reports, particularly those which give advice and warnings from retired Vice-Admiral Harry Porter, of the intentions of the United States to build some 50 or 60 240,000 ton supertankers for use in the Arctic Archipelago through the Northwest Passage, so-called escorted by armed United States coastguard vessels with ice-breaking capability. Have we asked the United States government what their intentions are in this regard? Do we have a particular position at this time on this disturbing question?

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I cannot throw any light on the question for my hon. friend today. I will take the question as notice.

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**FINANCE****ALLEGATION BANKS COLLECTING TAX ON EXCHANGE OF  
OLYMPIC COINS**

**Mr. F. Oberle (Prince George-Peace River):** Mr. Speaker, my question is likely most appropriately directed to the Minister of Finance but the Minister of Justice should be involved. I should like to ask the minister if his department is aware of the fact that banks operating under federal charter in the various provinces are collecting a tax for the exchange of legal tender such as Olympic coins? If the minister is aware, what is he prepared to do about it?

**Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Justice):** Mr. Speaker, I will be glad to discuss the matter with my colleague the Minister of Finance or, indeed with the minister responsible for the coins.

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**AGRICULTURE****SUGAR BEETS—GOVERNMENT POSITION ON  
RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF INDUSTRY**

**Mr. R. E. McKinley (Huron-Middlesex):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture. Because the time is fast approaching when farmers will be deciding what crops they should plant in 1975, can the minister advise whether his proposal made to cabinet regarding the