

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

[Text]

**Hon. Walter L. Gordon (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, as I think my hon. friend knows, government policy on all matters in connection with tariffs and other economic policies are announced at the appropriate time.

**LABOUR RELATIONS****ST. TITE, QUE—REQUEST FOR FEDERAL INTERVENTION IN STRIKE**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Industry. Have any representations been made to him on behalf of the workers at G. A. Boulet, Limitée, St. Tite, Quebec, who have been on strike since August 20 because of the refusal by management to bargain collectively with the workers? Is the department taking any steps to look into this matter, inasmuch as this firm does most of its work for the Department of National Defence? Is the department doing anything to make sure that firms which take national defence contracts are providing fair and proper working conditions for their employees?

**Hon. C. M. Drury (Minister of Industry):** Mr. Speaker, the Department of Defence Production has looked into this particular problem. Unfortunately I do not have the details in front of me, not having had notice of the question, but I can say that to my recollection this matter involves an industrial dispute relating to recognition of the employees' organization for bargaining purposes at Boulet and Company in Shawinigan or Grand'Mère. We have not had occasion for some time to place a contract with Boulet and Company, and at the present time they are engaged in processing a contract which was awarded prior to the breaking out of this dispute. As far as I know, Mr. Speaker, the Department of Defence Production has not suffered any prejudice as a consequence of the dispute with respect to either prices or time of delivery.

**Hon. Léon Balcer (Three Rivers):** As a supplementary question, would the minister consider sending an inspector to that plant to see whether the labour conditions are really as bad as we have been told and, if they are, would he consider suspending this contract altogether?

**Mr. Drury:** Mr. Speaker, I hope the hon. gentleman is not suggesting that the Depart-

[Mr. Pigeon.]

ment of Defence Production should in effect start discharging what are the functions of the Quebec department of labour. The responsibility for this resides with the provincial department of labour. I would be glad to have my officers communicate the views of the hon. member to the Quebec department of labour, but I do not think this is a proper area in which the Department of Defence Production should operate.

**Mr. Douglas:** May I ask a supplementary question. The departments of public works across Canada, federally and provincially, generally require in all their contracts that there be provision for certain fair wages and working conditions. Is such a clause inserted in contracts granted by the Department of Defence Production? Is there such a clause in the agreement with the company in question, and what steps does the minister's department take to police these contracts to see that the fair wage and labour condition clauses are complied with?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Surely this is a question for the order paper.

**Mr. Douglas:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, when you say to put the question on the order paper may I point out that we have had questions on it since June, some five or six months ago.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Douglas:** Here is a question involving men who are out on strike and who have been on strike since August 20, and these men are working on Department of National Defence contracts. Surely the federal government has some responsibility to see that those working on government contracts comply with minimum labour standards. That is all I am asking the minister to do, to see if these minimum labour standards are being kept and if these clauses are being policed.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. member has made that point at least twice, but I still think it is a question for the order paper.

[Translation]

**Mr. Rémi Paul (Berthier-Maskinongé-Delaudaudière):** Mr. Speaker, did the Minister of Industry communicate with the minister of labour of the province of Quebec or with officers of that department to try and settle the strike at the Boulet, Ltee industries in St. Tite?

**Mr. Drury:** I understood the question well, Mr. Speaker, and, to my knowledge, the answer is no.