

they have purchased even during winter months?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, although as Minister of Finance I find myself in the extraordinary position of speaking for the Canadian Wheat Board, I really do not have any responsibility for keeping Hudson Bay open. Perhaps this question should be directed to another minister.

Mr. Rapp: I have a supplementary question which I should perhaps direct to the Minister of Transport. Will he give consideration to this matter so this sea route may be kept open, in view of the fact that the Russians have indicated they will make full use of this port even during the winter?

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I could be frivolous and say that I will use every submarine the Department of Transport has for this purpose, but I do not think that would impress the house. Let me say seriously to the hon. member that the Department of Transport, the harbours board and the Department of Public Works are giving every attention to doing everything possible in order to use the port of Churchill to a maximum. This will be all the more necessary because of the unhappy interruption in service being experienced at the moment.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

QUEBEC—REQUEST FOR DELAY IN CLOSING OF OFFICES

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. R. Keays (Gaspé): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Labour. In view of the imminent closing of five of the six unemployment insurance offices located in the lower St. Lawrence region, will the minister consider delaying the implementation of that decision until representations from those affected can be presented to him?

Hon. J. R. Nicholson (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, as I have said before, decision in this matter is the responsibility of the unemployment insurance commission itself. However, I will pass on the hon. member's suggestion to that commission. I am sure he will appreciate that many weeks' notice was given by the commission of its intention to act, not only in his riding but in many other ridings in Canada.

Mr. Keays: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. Does the minister wish to

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indicate that notice was given in the areas in which these offices are to be closed?

Mr. Nicholson: I cannot speak specifically as to the notice in the hon. member's riding, but I do know that somewhere between 50 and 100 notices in this regard have been sent out in the course of the last three or four months.

Mr. Keays: A further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I would ask the minister to look into this matter further, because it is not one riding that is concerned but four ridings in the lower St. Lawrence, and in none of them has notice been given.

Mr. Nicholson: Mr. Speaker, I have assured the hon. member that I will draw his observations to the attention of the commission.

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY

REPORTED STATEMENT RESPECTING PENSIC RIGHTS OF STRIKERS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Labour. In view of the statement made by Mr. Ian Sinclair, president of the Canadian Pacific Railway, that any striking railway workers who fail to go back to work for the Canadian Pacific Railways may lose their pension rights, will he consider drawing to Mr. Sinclair's attention the law on this subject as set out in the Industrial Relations and Disputes Investigation Act?

Hon. J. R. Nicholson (Minister of Labour): I will be pleased to do so, Mr. Speaker.

OLD AGE SECURITY

INQUIRY AS TO AMOUNT IN FUND

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Eric A. Winkler (Grey-Bruce): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of National Health and Welfare. I should like to ask whether there has been any diminution in the amount in the federal old age security fund since July 15, contrary to information previously acquired from his department.

Hon. A. J. MacEachen (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I think this is a matter for the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Winkler: Then could I ask the Minister of Finance the same question?