

other producer organizations to make representations about in the very near future.

SUGGESTED AUTHORIZATION OF CANADA GRAINS
COMMISSION TO ACT AS LONGSHORING COMPANY
BECAUSE OF STRIKE

Mr. A. P. Gleave (Saskatoon-Biggar): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the minister in charge of the Wheat Board in the absence from the House of the Minister of Agriculture. In view of the request by Mr. Atkinson, president of the National Farmers Union, to the minister in charge of the Wheat Board as well as to the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Agriculture that action be taken, to authorize the Canada Grains Commission to act as a longshoring or stevedoring company in order to ensure that the movement of wheat through the St. Lawrence ports can be resumed, would the minister inform the House what action is being taken either by himself or the Minister of Agriculture on this request?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, it would be premature to make a response to that specific question at this time. The delicate situation on the St. Lawrence is, of course, fully in the mind of the Minister of Labour and I would want his views on any action in this regard.

[Later:]

Mr. Gleave: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary to the question I asked earlier. This situation is not only delicate but to western farmers it is disastrous. Can the minister in charge of the Wheat Board tell the House whether the Board of Grain Commissioners or the Canadian Wheat Board have been asked to assess the situation at the St. Lawrence ports and the extent to which it is affecting the movement of grain both for export and domestic use in Quebec and in the Maritimes?

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, naturally, the Canadian Wheat Board and the minister have been in discussion about the difficulties which the labour situation in the Montreal area can create for the movement of grain. We are very concerned about it and have made this concern known to the Minister of Labour who has indicated to the House his great concern about this matter and also how he thinks a solution should be found.

ADDITIONAL SALE TO CHINA—PAYMENT OF FREIGHT—
ADEQUACY OF PRICE TO RETURN PROFIT TO FARMERS

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Justice. There is widespread interest among western farmers concerning the recent sale of wheat to Communist China. They are wondering whether the price is one that will return to them any advantage or profit, in other words, more than the estimated cost of production today which, according to the group that met recently in Minneapolis, is \$1.76 a bushel. Would the minister say whether or not, first, the government of China or the purchasing agent for China is paying the freight on this sale and, if so, from which point to which point? Second, is the price being received one that is really in the nature of a fire-sale price

Inquiries of the Ministry

which will return very little, if anything, to western farmers?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, as has been indicated many times in the House, and I am sure in the past by the right hon. gentleman himself, pricing information about sales made by the Canadian Wheat Board is confidential commercial information. I can assure the right hon. gentleman, however, that the pricing negotiated by the Canadian Wheat Board is the best possible obtainable in a competitive market. I can also tell the right hon. member that the ordinary practice is for the buyer to pay the freight on grain, either basis Vancouver or Thunder Bay.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, that answer amounts to nothing. It is simply a multiplicity of words chasing an idea. The minister says that it is not customary to allow the price to be known. A couple of weeks ago he told me that it is very easy to figure out because from day to day the Wheat Board announces its sale prices. The minister has stated that it is not a fire-sale price. I challenge him to produce the record and show what the sale price was.

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• (1510)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

REQUEST THAT MOTION TO REFER PUBLIC ACCOUNTS
FOR YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 1971, TO COMMITTEE BE
PROCEEDED WITH

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the government House leader. Will he move at the earliest possible opportunity the motion that stands in his name that the public accounts for the year ended March 31, 1971, and the Auditor General's report thereon be referred to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts? If he would do that I can assure him there would be no debate on the motion as far as this party is concerned.

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, if it is understood there would be no debate, I would be happy to move it as the first item of government business today.

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CANADIAN COASTGUARD

TENDERS FOR RECONSTRUCTION OF COLLEGE
GYMNASIUM AND LIBRARY FOLLOWING FIRE

Mr. Robert Muir (Cape Breton-The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport. With your permission, may I first say how much it was regretted that he was unable to be present over the weekend at the fourth graduation ceremonies of the Canadian Coastguard College.

In view of the great concern expressed not only by many parents and cadets but also by the director of the Canadian Coastguard College regarding lack of proper facilities at the college, will the minister advise how soon