

of the *Financial Post* shows that 145 ships have waited for more than six weeks to be loaded with wheat, 75 million bushels of which are piled up at Thunder Bay contained in 4,000 railway cars. Can we be sure that at least grain from that port is moving at this time?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport): I think the hon. gentleman knows that there has been a strike in the great lakes area. I should like to know if he has a solution to that, other than getting the parties together and settling it.

Mr. Woolliams: Perhaps I misunderstood one of the ministers who spoke yesterday—that is quite easy sometimes—but is the strike at Thunder Bay and in the St. Lawrence area over and is the grain moving? One minister says it is not moving and he cannot do anything about it, he is paralysed, and the other minister says he is not paralysed and things are going ahead. Surely, we can get an answer.

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour): Grain is moving out of Port Arthur.

Mr. Woolliams: I should like to ask one more question. When the bill is introduced on Monday, will the Minister of Labour presenting the bill be prepared to tell us how much the demurrage charges to the western farmers amount to because of the strikes which were allowed to drag on as a result of the paralysis of this government.

Mr. Munro: Without indicating any agreement with the excessive comment of the hon. member with respect to this matter, it seems that he wishes to discuss the bill next Monday. Perhaps he has come to a conclusion before the start of the discussions. I can certainly advise the hon. member that we are trying to get this whole grain matter resolved as quickly as possible.

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● (1200)

MANPOWER

WINTER WORKS PROGRAM—POSSIBLE INCREASE IN ALLOCATIONS FOR BRITISH COLUMBIA AND QUEBEC IN VIEW OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN LUMBER INDUSTRY

Mr. Stuart Leggatt (New Westminster): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister. In view of the unemployment in the lumber industry, particularly in British Columbia and Quebec with 11,000 workers laid off in British Columbia and 9,000 in Quebec, and in view of the depressed state of that market, will the Prime Minister advise if his government is considering increasing the allocation for the winter works capital fund this winter?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, any announcement we make in that regard will be made to the House.

Oral Questions

HOUSING

REQUEST FOR REDUCTION OF MORTGAGE INTEREST RATE TO STIMULATE CONSTRUCTION AND INCREASE EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Stuart Leggatt (New Westminster): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Minister of State for Urban Affairs but I do not see him. Is the parliamentary secretary for the minister present? Anybody present? I will direct my question to the parliamentary secretary. In view of the fact that this depression in the lumber industry has been exacerbated by the state of the housing market where most of the domestic consumption of lumber takes place, will the parliamentary secretary advise if the interest rates being charged by Central Mortgage and Housing will now come down so that we can increase construction of houses in this country and get some of those people who have been laid off, back to work?

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre De Bané (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State for Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I will take the question of the hon. member as notice.

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PUBLIC WORKS

SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENT OF WHARVES AND RETAINING WALLS ALONG ST. LAWRENCE TO PREVENT EROSION

Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Public Works.

I have no doubt that he feels concern over the problems of the riparian dwellers of the St. Lawrence River who see their properties worn away by erosion. Will the minister soon introduce amendments to modernize the eligibility standards thus allowing his department to intervene financially with a view to protecting properties on both shores of the St. Lawrence, building retaining walls and modernizing present wharves?

Hon. C. M. Drury (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, I shall be pleased to consider the suggestion and act accordingly.

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[English]

LABOUR CONDITIONS

REFERENCE TO ALLEGED STATEMENT BY DEPUTY MINISTER CONCERNING RATIFICATION OF WAGE CONTRACT SETTLEMENTS

Mr. Robert Muir (Cape Breton-The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the hon. Minister of Labour. According to recent reports the assistant deputy minister of labour, Mr. William Kelley, in a speech to the Canadian Chamber of Commerce is supposed to have suggested that wage contract settlements should be concluded without final ratification by union membership. May I ask the minister if this is now government policy or is it going to be government policy and if not, would he take steps to have these nonsensical statements cease immediately?