

Inquiries of the Ministry

Hon. J. R. Nicholson (Minister of Labour):

Yes, Mr. Speaker, this situation has been drawn to my attention and I have had a discussion about it within the last 15 minutes. The employers have taken and continue to take the position that since they have had to resort to the use of the courts by way of damage actions, and have indicated that they intend to proceed to enforce their legal rights through the courts, consequently this matter is sub judice, and this makes it very difficult for the Minister of Labour or any other official of government to intervene at this time. The employers have stated, and they make no bones about it, that while they have a limited number of supervisory employees, namely their foremen and some former foremen who have been recruited for service, they cannot provide all the direct supervision needed in view of what they allege is a planned work stoppage. Since they are not getting the return for the money they are expending, they have decided on this course of action and have said they are going to press their rights in the courts.

Mr. Douglas: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. While the damage action has to do with the employers and does not come under the purview of the Department of Labour, surely the matter of a lockout does. What action does the minister propose to take to see that these men are allowed to return to work and that the ports are allowed to function?

Mr. Nicholson: The position that they take is that this is not a lockout. Complaints have been made by some employees that they do not have adequate supervision in certain areas, and employers say on the other hand that it is impossible for them to function effectively.

[Later:]

Hon. J. R. Nicholson (Minister of Labour): While I am on my feet I wish to deal with a question asked earlier by the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam (Mr. Douglas). Information that I have received since the question was asked shows that some stevedoring companies on the west coast have not ordered the longshoremen's gangs out to work general cargo—but bulk cargo is still being handled by the gangs. Supervision is being provided by available foremen. My information happily is that grain loading is moving fairly well.

[Mr. Douglas.]

[Translation]

HEALTH AND WELFARE**MEDICARE—INCLUSION OF ADDITIONAL SERVICES IN MEASURE**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Réal Caouette (Villeneuve): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare.

We are now considering Bill No. C-227 dealing with the medical care plan. Has the minister received any representations from the various provinces asking for the inclusion in that bill of services rendered by podiatrists, optometrists, chiropractors and, if so, does he intend to accede to those requests?

Mr. Speaker: Since the hon. member said himself that the bill was now before the house, he could easily put this question during the discussion in committee.

Mr. Caouette: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I realize that I can ask questions in committee. Besides, I took that opportunity last night, but I would like to know whether the minister's intention is to include in Bill No. C-227 the services of podiatrists, chiropractors and optometrists.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member put the same question at ten o'clock last night when the house adjourned and it is my impression that he will probably raise it again later this afternoon.

[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**RHODESIA—SUPPORT OF SELECTIVE MANDATORY SANCTIONS**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. R. N. Thompson (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to the right hon. Prime Minister. In view of the pending visit of Sir Saville Garner, Undersecretary of State for Commonwealth Relations of the British government, to Washington and Ottawa, could the Prime Minister inform us whether he has had consultation with our representative in London serving as chairman of the sanctions committee on Rhodesia, or with the British government with regard to the reply they have received from the Rhodesian government?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Yes, Mr. Speaker, we have been in continuous consultation through our High Commissioner at Canada House, the United Kingdom