

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member should not take advantage of a question to make charges; he must limit himself to asking a question or requesting information.

Mr. Grégoire: In that case, Mr. Speaker, here is my supplementary question: Can the Acting Prime Minister tell us if the government has given or will give the people responsible for the use of those icebreakers instructions to intervene effectively instead of remaining idle, as has been the case this year, when ice-jams begin to build up?

Mr. Speaker: Order. Orders of the day.

Mr. Grégoire: Mr. Speaker, I should like to put another question to the Acting Prime Minister. Could he tell us whether he also intends to draw that matter to the attention of the Minister of Transport to make him alter the policy of his department concerning the activities of the icebreakers on the St. Lawrence during the winter?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member is making a representation which will be noted by the minister.

Mr. Grégoire: It is not a representation, Mr. Speaker, it is a question.

[English]

Mr. Thomas M. Bell (Saint John-Albert): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the extreme ice conditions in the St. Lawrence river this year will the government now realize that there is no future in ice-breaking, forget about icebreaking in the St. Lawrence in the winter and use the ports of Halifax and Saint John?

[Translation]

Mr. Grégoire: Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a supplementary question.

Since there are great possibilities for winter navigation on the St. Lawrence, could the Acting Prime Minister tell us whether he intends to take that problem into consideration instead of preventing the economic development of one region in favour of another?

Mr. Speaker: Order.

[English]

GRAIN**WHEAT—POSSIBILITY OF DELAY IN NEW INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. R. R. Southam (Moose Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of

Trade and Commerce which is of deep concern to western grain growers. Can the minister report to the house on the present status of the international world wheat agreement? Can he assure us that the tardiness of a number of countries in not signing the agreement will not delay its coming into effect on July 1 next?

Hon. Robert Winters (Minister of Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, the situation remains unaltered. It is still difficult to sell wheat in world markets. We are in constant touch with the producing countries of the world. I have been in touch with them about this matter. I feel that wheat prices will be such as to encourage the implementation of the international wheat agreement. As the hon. member will recall, the date for the ratification of the agreement is in mid-1968, and I am still hopeful that that will be the case.

WATER RESOURCES**POLLUTION BY OIL ON PACIFIC COAST**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. T. S. Barnett (Comox-Alberni): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Acting Minister of Transport concerning water pollution on the Pacific coast. Can the minister tell the house whether pollution by oil has resulted from the sinking of the motor vessel *Schiedyk* in Nootka Sound just off Vancouver Island? Has the vessel been salvaged or destroyed?

Mr. Speaker: I doubt that the question is in order, but if a reply is ready perhaps the house will hear it.

Mr. J. A. Byrne (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, realizing that the minister was indisposed I asked for a report on this matter over the week end. Summarizing the extensive report I wish to say that all necessary steps and precautions are being taken to prevent the pollution of coastal waters. A log boom has been thrown around the area and absorbent straw is available. Degreasing solvents are also available. Of the 600 tons of oil that were reported to be in the tanker approximately 300 tons have escaped, at a rate of about three gallons per minute. That oil is not causing serious pollution at this time. There has been no loss of marine life and no loss of life on land among wildlife or water fowl.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I was wondering whether the hon. member was going ahead with the full report.