

will soon be reached. Has he any concrete information on which to base his belief that an agreement will be reached with the grain inspectors and that they will be back at work in a short time. If not, in view of the serious consequences to the total Canadian economy, is the government prepared to bring in emergency legislation, to order these people back to work?

[Translation]

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, since the beginning of the strike earlier this week, we are continually in touch with the unions. This morning, Mr. Finkelman has appointed a mediator and we hope he will be able to bring the two parties to an agreement, but I cannot predict what will happen in the future.

[English]

STRIKE OF GRAIN INSPECTORS—SUGGESTED RECALL FROM MEXICO OF MINISTER OF LABOUR

Mr. Doug Neil (Moose Jaw): Mr. Speaker, may I direct my question to the Prime Minister, in the absence of the Minister of Labour. As grain movements out of Canada have been virtually halted for the second time this year owing to the current grain inspectors' strike, and because approximately one million bushels of these shipments consist of famine relief supplies which are intended for starving nations, particularly Bangladesh, will the Prime Minister acknowledge the urgency of this matter by recalling the Minister of Labour from Mexico so that immediate action may be taken to ensure that grain movements return to normal as soon as possible.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the House will want to know, I am sure, that the minister is in Mexico attending the ILO conference, which even members on the opposite side may find important to Canada. The substance of the question has already been dealt with by the President of the Treasury Board, who has responsibility for this rather than the Minister of Labour. It has been dealt with, except to this extent: the question was inaccurate in that the hon. member did not realize that an exception was made for Bangladesh, to which country supplies are being sent.

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TRANSPORT

UPGRADING OF GRAIN MOVEMENT FACILITIES—ABILITY OF MINISTER TO KEEP COMMITMENT IN VIEW OF LABOUR DISPUTES

Mr. Doug Neil (Moose Jaw): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a supplementary question to the Minister of Transport. Will the minister explain to the House how he expects to fulfil the commitment made in the Speech from the Throne concerning the upgrading of grain movement facilities if the grain transport system is continually plagued with labour disruptions which appear to be beyond the control of the government.

Oral Questions

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I regret that the hon. gentleman decided not to address a serious question to me.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

[Translation]

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member wants to tell me that his party is ready to remove the right to strike from all those who are handling grain in Canada, I shall agree with him.

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[English]

FINANCE

WINTER WORKS PROGRAM—REQUEST FOR INCREASED FUNDS IN VIEW OF FORECAST INCREASE IN UNEMPLOYMENT

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. As the \$350 million winter capital works program fund which was set up in 1972 is now exhausted I ask, in view of the forecast that unemployment levels will increase this winter and in the coming spring, if the minister intends to add new funds to this capital works fund.

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, we are reviewing this program. The momentum of this program will carry it forward until May 31, 1975. We hope to supplement it by providing some stimulation to the housing market and the construction industry. We hope this will remedy the situation which the hon. member has in mind.

PROVISION OF LOW INTEREST LOANS TO MUNICIPALITIES FOR THE INSTALLATION OF SERVICES—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the urgent need for municipal services, particularly the need for finances for services associated with the construction of housing, will the minister consider providing emergency low interest rate loans to municipalities so that they can provide services which are necessary for the construction of an increased number of housing units during the coming winter months.

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt, because provinces exercise authority over the priorities under which the money is to be spent, that the winter capital works program in some provinces was directed to the infrastructure in municipal services. The hon. member will recall, of course, that the budget provides tax relief for sewage plants and municipal transport, and this should go some way to relieving that particular problem.