

that on the strength of that he should suggest to the cabinet that the Department of Transport buy its own equipment and do its own dredging, in the same manner as it already looks after buoys and icebreaking operations?

[English]

**Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. gentleman for his suggestions. We have great confidence in the Minister of Transport, too. But there is a serious problem in connection with the ongoing work of dredging that may have to be done in this country. Most of the companies involved in dredging have been named in the prosecution. I would not necessarily accept his suggestion about nationalization, but I recognize the problem that exists.

[Translation]

**Mr. Wagner:** Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a supplementary to the Minister of Transport.

As he seemed to nod his head in approval a while ago, I should like to ask him whether he is willing to approve this idea and expose his views on the subject?

**Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport):** I nodded in approval, Mr. Speaker, for the simple reason that I feel the idea is worth considering. The situation in Canada is not the same everywhere; that is to say that, if we talk of the west coast for instance, dredging can go on 12 months a year and depreciation of the equipment can be spread over 12 months; the same does not apply to eastern Canada where ice naturally brings the use of the equipment to a standstill in November. The idea is therefore worthy of consideration, which is what I wanted to indicate when I nodded.

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[English]

#### PUBLIC SERVICE

##### STRIKE OF GENERAL LABOUR AND TRADES GROUP— GOVERNMENT ACTION TO RESTORE MOVEMENT OF GRAIN— REQUEST FOR STATEMENT

**Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Acting Prime Minister. Could he advise the House whether the government has determined the course of action it is prepared to take or will take to restore the movement of grain and shipping generally?

**Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, this and other related questions are under most active consideration but no decisions have been taken.

**Mr. Speaker:** A supplementary question, the hon. member for Dartmouth—order, please, the hon. Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce.

**Mr. Gillespie:** Mr. Speaker, with your agreement I should like to complete the answer to a question put to me by the hon. member—

Some hon. Members: No, no!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

#### Oral Questions

**Mr. Chrétien:** They do not want an answer.

**Mr. Speaker:** Perhaps the minister could wait about five minutes until the end of the question period.

**Mr. Forrestall:** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question arises partly out of the minister's response and partly out of what we consider to be the urgency and necessity of some information for the Canadian public. Would the minister undertake to advise this House—not today as we accept that negotiation and consideration is an ongoing matter—but on Friday on motions of the present situation with respect to mediation efforts in Vancouver and more particularly with respect to the general situation between the Treasury Board and the General Labour and Trades Groups?

**Mr. Sharp:** Mr. Speaker, I shall certainly advise my colleagues the Acting Minister of Labour and the President of the Treasury Board to be as forthcoming as possible. I hope my hon. friend recognizes that there are two dangers which we should try to avoid. One is to have negotiations in this House and the other is for the negotiations to proceed under the threat of parliamentary action.

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#### FISHERIES

##### POSITION TO BE TAKEN BY CANADA AT LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE ON JURISDICTION OVER COASTAL WATERS— REQUEST FOR STATEMENT

**Mr. Walter C. Carter (St. John's West):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of State responsible for Fisheries concerning a motion which I presented under Standing Order 43 about the position to be taken by this country at the forthcoming law of the Sea Conference. As the minister's colleagues refused to approve the motion, which refusal I consider to be a betrayal of the rights of our fishermen and evidence of this government's contempt for our fishermen, and as the motion is in effect the same motion which was debated and approved by the House in June, 1973—

● (1520)

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member for St. John's West has the floor for the purpose of asking a question. I wonder if he would ask his question.

**Mr. Carter:** Mr. Speaker, as the motion dealt with the position which was being espoused by the minister and his colleagues outside the House and in committee, will the minister assure the House and fishermen of the country that the Canadian position has not changed and that the position we shall put forward at the forthcoming Law of the Sea Conference will be the same as that outlined by him and his colleagues on numerous occasions in the past couple of years.

**Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of State (Fisheries)):** Mr. Speaker, I do not think the fishermen of the country need to be reassured after the excellent speech my colleague, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, made in Halifax a couple of weeks ago. But, if they need to be