

the privileges and traditions of parliament and not to be permitted, even from the right hon. gentleman.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Mr. Speaker, there is nothing to withdraw; my statement stands. There is concealment from the farmers because the minister is afraid of revealing the information.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cossitt:** Mr. Speaker, I should like to draw the attention of the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council to three questions I placed on the order paper on January 11 which have not been answered, namely, Nos. 257, 273 and 274. Because the answers should be fairly straightforward I think they should have been forthcoming before now. Like the right hon. member for Prince Albert, I realize that two of the questions may be an embarrassment to the government, but I do not see any reason why the answers should be held up. I wonder whether we could have some idea of when the answers might be forthcoming.

**Mr. Reid:** Mr. Speaker, I shall be delighted to look into it.

**Mr. Hees:** As the Prime Minister says, "in due course", which means eight months from Wednesday.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, may I express the hope that the answer to starred question No. 811 will be given by the Minister of Finance on Wednesday?

**Mr. Nielsen:** It could be available tomorrow.

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

### LABOUR RELATIONS

#### ELEVATOR CONSTRUCTORS' STRIKE—FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ACTION TO ACHIEVE SETTLEMENT

**Mr. Sinclair Stevens (York-Simcoe):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Labour. Now that the elevator constructors' strike has entered its 178th day, with some 2,300 workers idled in every province, with building projects worth tens of millions of dollars being delayed in urban areas, creating more unemployment, would the Minister of Labour now accept some responsibility and attempt, working in conjunction with provincial authorities, if necessary, to conciliate this dispute which is the first such national strike in Canada's history?

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member feels so strongly, would he be good enough to advise the premier of the province of Ontario—

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

### Oral Questions

**Mr. Munro (Hamilton East):**—whether he is prepared to turn over to me what, constitutionally, is his responsibility? Then I will consider an answer to the hon. member's question.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I apologize to the hon. member. Is the hon. member for Burnaby-Richmond-Delta rising on a point of order?

**Mr. Reynolds:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. Being new in the House I am not sure what the Minister of Labour meant by his answer, but do I take it that it is now government policy for opposition members to deal with provincial premiers?

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member who had the floor wishes to ask a supplementary.

**Mr. Stevens:** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is again directed to the Minister of Labour. I can assure him that I have gone a little farther than he has suggested and have actually contacted the company representatives and the union representatives. Would the minister inform the House whether he will take action this afternoon to help reconcile the strike of elevator constructors, bearing in mind that this morning Mr. Leo Moore, Canadian Vice-president of the union involved, and Mr. E. M. Tuff, chief negotiator for the companies involved, told me that they would welcome any federal assistance that might be forthcoming? I can give the minister their telephone numbers, if he likes, but let us have some action.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Munro (Hamilton East):** Mr. Speaker, neither the federal government nor the federal Minister of Labour has any responsibility in the matter. We have no legitimate—

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Munro (Hamilton East):**—basis from which to operate, and the parties know that. However, if the provinces, including the province of Ontario, invite me to intervene and be helpful, then I will have a basis upon which to make a contribution toward the settlement of this dispute. Until that happens this government and I are powerless.

**Mr. Nielsen:** Why don't you offer to help?

**Mr. Munro (Hamilton East):** Mr. Speaker, I have offered.

**Mr. Stevens:** My supplementary is directed to the Minister of Finance, in view of the doubletalk I have been getting from the Minister of Labour.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member should ask his question. This is not a debate. The question period, as much as possible, should be devoted to straightforward questions and answers. It seems to me that all hon. members ought to bear this in mind. Perhaps the hon. member should ask his supplementary.