

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Speaker: This question was asked a few days ago and the minister answered it at that time.

Mr. Valade: Mr. Speaker, could I formulate my question differently and—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Does the hon. member wish to ask a supplementary?

Mr. Valade: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a supplementary question that will be in order.

Could the minister tell us whether the policy will affect the dairy industry and which steps he will take to protect the Canadian dairy industry?

Mr. Speaker: I will allow the minister to reply to the question, but here again, I believe the supplementary was the subject of an answer by the minister.

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, I can say that it is only when there is a shortage that we import butter from New Zealand.

[English]

LABOUR RELATIONS

WEST COAST TOWBOAT STRIKE—MANNING AND SAFETY REGULATIONS

Mr. Mark Rose (Fraser Valley West): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. In view of the telegram received by the Ministers of Transport and Labour from the President of the Canadian Labour Congress, will the government reconvene the meetings in Vancouver to improve safety standards on British Columbia towboats before this dispute leads to an increasing economic crisis in British Columbia?

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I want to make it perfectly plain that negotiations with regard to safety and manning standards are not, in my judgment, a proper matter for labour negotiation. However, in so far as there are tripartite negotiations under way strictly on the matter of safety, we will reconvene these meetings at the earliest possible moment that is convenient to all parties, and I expect that that will be within a few days.

Mr. Rose: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Since one of the officials who participated in the earlier negotiations on behalf of the Department of Transport is reported to be with the *Manhattan* and another is in the

[Mr. Valade.]

Bahamas, has the minister other competent officials that he is prepared to send out immediately to see that these talks are reconvened?

Mr. Jamieson: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I am sure there are officials fully versed in the complexities of this matter who can be sent, and I am certain that this will not cause any delay in the reopening of the talks.

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Transport. Is he aware that the opinion is being expressed that if the departmental regulations in regard to safety, manning and conveniences were appropriately revised, this would very rapidly open the way to a settlement of this whole dispute which is such a threat to the economy of the west? In view of this, would the minister really get on the job and have these regulations revised?

Mr. Jamieson: Mr. Speaker, with regard to the last part of the comment, we have been on the job. I was the first one to meet with the unions on the west coast to establish this procedure. However, I do think it is improper to directly involve the establishment of safety standards with a labour dispute. The question of standards should be a question of deciding what are the best safety features, and should not be the subject of negotiation between the owners and the operators. It is on this rather delicate point I want to be sure we are fully understood. But there will be no unnecessary delay in resuming negotiations. I can assure the hon. member of that.

Mr. Stanfield: I have one further supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I ask the Minister of Transport not to lean too heavily on the niceties he wishes to preserve in terms of separation of responsibilities but to bear in mind—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Leader of the Opposition has the floor for the purpose of asking a question. I suggest that he should not engage in debate.

HOUSING

BUILDING MATERIALS SALES TAX—MORTGAGE MONEY AND INTEREST RATES—WHITE PAPER CAPITAL GAINS PROPOSAL

Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct this question to the Minister of Finance. In light of recent statements which indicate that the sales tax on building materials brought the